THE

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

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AN OLD MAN'S DARLING.

BY PHŒBE CARY.

So I'm "crazy," in loving a man of threescore;
Why, I never had come to my senses before:
But I'm doubtful of yours, if you're thinking to prove
My insanity, just by the fact of my love.

You would like to know what are his wonderful wiles;
Only delicate praises, and flattering smiles;
'Tis no spell of enchantment, no magical art,
But the way he says "darling," that goes to my heart.

Yes, he's "sixty," I cannot dispute with you there:
But you'd make him a hundred, I think, if you dare;
And I'm glad all his folly of first love is past,
Since I'm sure, of the two, it is best to be last.

So, if I'm insane, you will own, I am sure,
That the case is so hopeless, that it's past any cure;
And, besides, it is acting no very wise part,
To be treating the head for disease of the heart.

And if anything could make a woman believe
That no dream can delude, and no fancy deceive,
That she never knew lover's enchantment before,
It's being the darling of one of threescore!

AN OLD MAN'S DARLING!

By MILLIE W. CARPENTER.

Author of "Such Sweet Sorrow," Etc.

"If I could go this one time, I should be contented. I could stop at home with you forever after, then. Let me go this once!"

CHAPTER I.

OUT IN THE WORLD.

A parlor in a handsome country house, large, airy, bright. Through the open windows the late afternoon sunshine streams, lighting up the soft gray walls, the pretty bright-colored carpet, and the comfortable cane-bottomed chairs and sofas. A tea-table stands in the centre of the floor, and over it a young girl bends, giving the last finishing touches. When all is done she turns her head and without moving, calls aloud in a fresh, sweet voice:

"Ellice! Ellice! leave your packing, and haste to the banquet! Come, Nellie! tea is waiting."

Five minutes afterwards, in response to this summons, two ladies came leisurely, arm in arm, down the stairs. They are both of them beautiful, but with a difference in their beauty. And which was the loveliest, the looker-on would be puzzled to choose between, where both are so fair. Mrs. Shrewsbury is the more womanly of the two. She is taller and fuller, and her dark eyes droop scornfully as if they were already half tired of looking out in the world.

Nellie Childersohn, the young mistress of the house, is the true blonde American type. She has blue black eyes, a dazzling fair complexion and hair woven of threads of gold.

They drop into their seats at the table with a soft chatter. Mr. Childersohn, the master of the house, is waiting; he bows his head, white with the snows of sixty winters, and murmurs a lengthy "grace," during which Mrs. Shrewsbury wonders if she can get another dress into the already over-crowded trunk up-stairs, and Nellie, with her eyes half shut, looks dutifully at the ceiling. Jennie, the pretty teamaker, who is a younger sister of Mrs. Childersohn, stares hard at the silver urn and hopes that the muffins are not getting cold.

"How much I shall miss your five-o'clock teas, after I get back into the world," remarks Mrs. Shrewsbury, when her cup at length is handed to her. "Five o'clock is the green spot in the dull oasis of a summer day in the country. It seems to be the one hour, too, in which we are all awake, and in harmony. I shall, really, quite miss it."

"I have tried to get Nellie to change the hour," replies Mr. Childersohn, mildly. "It breaks up the afternoon and spoils a good half day's work for me. Seven o'clock would be much more to my mind."

"I am glad, at least, you have not made the change while I am here," responds Mrs. Shrewsbury, politely; and Mrs. Childersohn who has been biding her time, now embraces the opportunity to come to the fore.

"Charles, dear, I want to tell you. Ellice has asked me to accompany her to Newport. She got a letter from Mr. Shrewsbury this morning. He writes that business calls him to the South, and he will not be able to join her for three or four weeks, yet. Her rooms are already engaged, waiting for her at Newport, and she invites me to share them with her."

She fidgets with her teaspoon, while the color in her rose-leaf cheeks comes and goes brightly. Her husband finishes his cup and wipes his beard deliberately, before he answers:

"Mrs. Shrewsbury is very kind, she knows how well I love to see you enjoy yourself. But I could not think of sending you to such a place as Newport with no one to take care of you."

Nellie's face falls. She knows that tone so well. Kind but decided, with the decision of one who has not given much thought to the matter, and is therefore the more immovable.

"I should like to go so much," she falters. "We have so few pleasures here. And I go so little out. Only two weeks, I would be satisfied with two. It is not a very long time." Her lips quiver pleadingly.

He keeps on placidly eating and drinking, and his young wife eyes him discontentedly. She sees now plainlier than she ever has seen before, the aggravation of his white hairs, of his wrinkles, his failing sight and nearly worn out life. Age has invested him with a noble dignity, but she is just now blind to it. His white locks fall over a forehead serene with gracious thought; his calm eyes look at her with a tender reverence in them, but her own are full of tears. She will not see that it is the instinct of a true and great love which bids him keep her in the home nest, warm and pure.

"You will let me go, won't you?" she pleads again.

"My darling child, do not say a word about it. If you wish a change so much, I will take you down the river somewhere for a week. It will be much quieter and better for your health."

Nellie flings up her angry head. The tears dry out of her blue eyes. Hot flushes drift over her cheeks. Even her soft throat is stained with the rich red dye.

"I don't want to go down the river," she answers, unsteadily. "It would be as dull and stupid as it is at home. I want to go with Ellice. You have never taken me anywhere. You keep me home as if I were a little child. You—you——"

Her voice falters, stops, and in another moment to her husband's horror, she is sobbing aloud.

"Nellie! Nellie!" cries Jennie, appealingly.

Mrs. Shrewsbury, a little bored, a little amused to find herself in the midst of a pretty quarrel, partly of her own making, rises and with a faint apology leaves the room. Jennie, too, steals away, leaving the husband and wife to make up their difference alone.

As the door closes, Nellie creeps to Mr. Childersohn's side and twines a fair arm round his neck.

"If I could go this one time, I should be contented. I could stop at home with you forever after, then. Let me go this once?"

He passes his hand over her clustering curls and looks down at the bright face nestling on his arm. Perchance his mind goes back for an instant, to his own youth, with its hey-day of pleasures so quickly gone. Some of them were mad and merry enough, he knows; a few, a very few, were pure and sweet. Nellie feels his softened touch and brightens. She raises her tear-wet face, like a rose in the rain.

"You will let me go," she cries, joyfully. "You promise?"

She kisses him over and over. "How good you are!—how good!"

"You hasty child! You shall go—not to Newport—but to the city, to the French fair with me next week. There is to be a circus one day, with wild beasts—a real wild woman, too, and—and"—he rubs his forehead—"I have forgotten what else; but it is said to be a great sight. I will write at once for my cousin to take rooms for us at Stanwix House——"

He stops suddenly. Nellie has broken away from him and stands upright, white, passionate, trembling. Her eyes flash; her lips quiver with shame and disappointment. She makes one or two efforts to speak and then flings herself prone upon the floor, a heap of blue muslin and tossed waving yellow hair.

"I want to go! I want to go!" she sobs. "You don't care for me. You treat me as if I were a child. You think because you are old and I am young that you can keep me at home forever. But I will run away! I won't bear it any longer! I hate you! I hate you!"

Her voice rises hysterically, and Mr. Childersohn hastens to shut the door, thus shutting out all impertinent lookers-on from the pretty comedy scene of reconciliation that follows swiftly after.

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A few more tears; a few more sighs! A little more weeping and pleading, with reproachful looks, and Mrs. Childersohn has her way. Mrs. Shrewsbury has generously consented to delay her departure for two or three days, and there are hasty consultations over dresses, and hurrying to and fro of seamstresses, and confusion of ribbons and silks and laces. It is fortunate that out of the ample trousseau which the rich bridegroom gave his darling two summers ago, enough remains to furnish a fitting wardrobe for a young matron of such limited experience as hers has been.

At length the momentous morning arrives, when the trunks are piled on the piazza waiting the coming of the passing stage; for in that primitive town railroads are not, save in prospective. Nellie flits from room to room, blithe as a skylark; the elderly husband's heart yearns over her in her fresh, unspoiled beauty; he knows what he is going to lose when she now goes out of his home without him for the first time since their marriage.

"Only two weeks, you know, Nellie; and you will be sure and write every day, won't you?"

"Two weeks, or perhaps three," responds the young wife. "Would you mind very much, dear, if they were to spin out to three in the end?"

"I should mind very much; but about writing; you will remember that, won't you? I shall be so lonely without you."

"Of course I shall remember it; but you will have Jennie to make your tea, and read to you. Take good care of him, Jennie."

Jennie is standing on a plethoric bag, making vigorous efforts to close its gaping mouth.

"Yes, dear; you must not worry about us. Charles, if you would just put your foot on this hateful thing. It won't clasp! There!"

It closes with a snap under Mr. Childersohn's added weight, and Jennie, rising with flushed face, gives the key to Martha, Mrs. Shrewsbury's maid, who stands majestically by. The hour draws near.

Mr. Childersohn lifts the sweet rose-leaf face of his darling in his hands for the last time. Alas, and alas! that it will never look so brightly up to his again.

"My darling! oh, my darling! I wish I had not consented to let you go. Is it too late, I wonder? And remember, Nellie, if you are homesick you must come back at once, even if it is the next day after you get there."

"Never fear," says Nellie, gayly. The minute hand whirls round and points the hour. "Dear me! how late the stage is. Do you think anything can have happened to delay it? Suppose," with a look of horror, "suppose it should not come along at all?"

Her fears are groundless. In due time the stage rolls up to the gate. It is crowded with passengers, inside and out; the driver has a "hurry up, now," air as he jibes on the baggage.

"Good-bye, good-bye, my darling!" and the parting is over.

"Halloa! stop there a moment! Hi! I say. Don't you hear?"

The driver looks around, and pulls up with a muttered exclamation as he sees Mr. Childersohn running along the dusty road with a little package in his hand, and Nellie puts out her bright head impatiently.

"I have brought you this picture, darling."

The picture is an old-fashioned ambrotype, and certainly it does not show Mr. Childersohn at his best. But a something pathetic in his voice, and touching in his manner, robs the action and the gift of a tint of the ludicrous which it might otherwise have taken.

Warm tears, the first she has shed this morning, rise to the young wife's eyes; a tender color mounts to her dimpled cheeks.

"Thank you, Charles," she says, gently. "I am glad you brought it."

The passengers, who to a man have been staring intently at this scene, now retire again into oblivion, and Mrs. Shrewsbury draws down her veil with a yawn. The driver cracks his whip, the leaping wheels turn round, and thus, with a blush and a tear, sweet Nellie Childersohn is whirled out into the great gay world.

CHAPTER II.

VANITY FAIR.

The booths of the great modern American Vanity Fair were crowded with the customary gilded throng, when Ellice Shrewsbury and her *proteges* made their appearance on the boulevards. The glittering chariot of fashion in its yearly course brings back the same jaded multitude; there is but little change in them. Their faces are a little more haggard, their drapery is a little more brilliant, that is all.

Nellie Childersohn walked up the length of the hotel parlor with Ellice the evening after their arrival, with a strange sense of exhilaration, born of the lights, the music, the stir of people. The band was playing outside, some children were dancing—children in figure, but with old, old faces and manners, seeming more like little grown up old men and women, playing their parts in the grotesque comedy on the stage. The airs and graces of one of these lilliputian belles touched Nellie's quick sense of fun, and she laughed out, a tiny, gurgling, quickly suppressed laugh. She was thinking of when, a wee bit of a girl herself, she had begged of her mother the privilege of wearing a new print dress, and of how carefully she had seated herself in her little cane chair so as not to wrinkle the well starched skirt.

A gentleman in one of the windows, hearing that happy sound, turned, caught sight of Ellice, and crossed over to where she was sitting.

"Mrs. Shrewsbury! How glad I am to welcome you at last. Where have you kept yourself all this long time?"

"Sunning myself in fresh fields and pastures new. And Mr. Henderson?"

"Worn out with vain efforts to kill time, as usual. And out of the green fields you brought that little girl, an offering to the gods! Jove! did you hear her laugh just now at those children? I haven't heard such a sound for years."

"More's the pity you don't hear it oftener. But let me tell you that 'little girl' is a dignified matron at home."

Mrs. Shrewsbury looked up and saw the gentleman's dark handsome eyes resting musingly on Nellie's changing face. "She is a good child," Ellice said, emphatically. "You must help me take care of her."

Mr. Henderson laughed a little consciously.

"That means I am not to flirt with her. Well, I promise you I won't, unless you give me permission. Meanwhile, you were telling me——"

"I found her down in the country, a beautiful young wife with a charming home, and——a husband——of sixty years——"

"Sixty years! Angels and ministers of grace defend us!"

"I dare say they will. The young wife is like a child in knowledge of the world. She wants to come to Newport, the husband objects; tears, pleadings, and you see the result. Baby is here; and, as I said before, you are to help me take care of her."

"How charming!" said Mr. Henderson. "But don't you rather tremble for the end, when you think what an ordeal she will be subject to from the gay butterflies here?"

Ellice made a quick, scornful jesture.

"Do you for a moment dream that I give a thought to these idlers? No; unsophisticated as Nellie is, they would have no power to move her, except to laughter. It is men like you, Karl, that I dread."

"Me?" cried the gentleman, in affected surprise. "My dear Mrs. Shrewsbury, can you imagine me, at my time of life, falling in love? How sarcastic you are."

"No," answered Ellice, bluntly. "It is precisely because you do not fall in love, that I am afraid of you. You men with no heart, to speak of, with your tired ways and looks, and your deferential manner to women, are the ones that win on such natures as Nellie's."

She sighed, and rising, took her companion's arm.

"But, come, let me take you to Nellie. She is wondering, I dare say, what we are talking about all this time."

A moment afterwards, Mrs. Shrewsbury, seeing the sweet red roses come and go in Nellie's face, as Karl Henderson bent his handsome head to catch her faltering words, reflected a little bitterly to herself:

"Yes, it is such men as you that I dread for her sake. The little goose! see her blush. I dare say she thinks he never wore that look, never addressed that tone to a woman before."

Mr. Henderson himself might have wondered a little at Mrs. Childersohn's emotion, but it was quite pleasure enough to watch the blood flush that waxen cheek, and he resigned himself to it epicureanly.

"I see I need not ask you how much you are enjoying this," he remarked. "Your face tells me that it is all new to you."

"Yes, it is all new to me," Nellie continued, frankly, "and I enjoy it very much. I like watching the different faces."

"Suppose we take a turn outside on the piazza," suggested Henderson. "We should have a better post of observation and run less risk of getting our toes stepped on while you study the human face divine."

As they rose Karl took the shawl that hung on Nellie's chair.

"I shall insist on your wearing this," he said, "though I'm glad to see you don't follow the senseless fashion of appearing in extreme full dress as so many of our brilliant belles do. You know I am to take care of you," he added quickly, in reply to Nellie's look; "I promised Mrs. Shrewsbury."

"Did you? I am glad of it. I hope I shall not give you much trouble."

Mr. Henderson, being a thorough gentleman, as well as a man of the world, gave no sign at this unconventional speech, but proceeded to extract what pleasure he could out of the situation.

"A rational way of enjoying one's self," he remarked, nodding his head to the dancers within. "Whirling round and round till one is not quite sure whether he is on his feet or not, with the ceiling spinning our head and the walls receding into space, seems to me only one step removed from lunacy."

"Do you think so?" answered Nellie, with a disappointed air. "I was only just wondering if there was any chance whether you would ask *me* to dance. You promised to take care of me, you know," wickedly.

Mr. Henderson at that moment perhaps experienced his first pang of regret at the task he had so lightly taken.

"I promised Charles I would not dance when I came away from home." The bright head drooped a little. "But—but, do you think he would mind if I were to dance one, only one, very short dance with you?"

She has stopped expectantly, and there is no alternative but for him to gratify her and to keep his head level and his feet from deserting him as best he may. Never an enthusiastic dancer at his best, he is on this warm summer evening unfeignedly glad when she gives the signal to retire after the first waltz.

"How delightful!" she cried, as the cool sea breeze struck her heated cheeks. "Shall we walk? How smooth the beach looks."

"Don't you think it rather—damp?" *Late*, he was going to say, but checked himself in time.

"Never mind; it won't hurt me. Come along."

He followed her; there was nothing else for him to do. The fret of the waves grew louder, the stir of dancing feet fainter and farther off.

"Come along," she said. It seemed to Karl that if she were to say "come along" in that manner, looking back over her shoulder and smiling, and then jump into the sea, he should follow her.

The water, flowing in, covered at night the white shingle, binding like a ribbon the green land, while beyond at a few rods the regular beach lay, with old ocean at its feet. Adventurous swimmers were fond of crossing this arm of the sea by moonlight, but this particular night Nellie had it to herself.

She skipped carelessly on. A boat, the merest cockle-shell, lay at her feet, and she sprang into it with a laugh. "Come along!" she cried.

"Good heavens!" he cried, "Mrs. Childersohn, don't get in it!" shouted Henderson, waking up. "Don't you see how insecurely it is fastened? There! I told you so."

The boat rocked violently, and Nellie shrieked aloud.

"Jump!" shouted Karl, bending over to catch her hands. The cockle-shell swung round; he was jerked suddenly forward, and only saved himself from falling by scrambling ingloriously, head first, into the boat. The frail thing swayed, and then righting itself floated slowly down, and struck at last on the other side.

"How came you to do such a thing?" cried Karl, angrily, as they scampered up the wet sand. "You might have been drowned."

You! He thought only of her danger, and she forgave him the angry tone and words.

"Don't scold, please," she said, meekly; "I am sorry. The question is, how are we to get back again?"

"I'm sure I don't know how," he replied, feeling a slight inclination to swear. If he could shake her, too, it would be some consolation.

"I can't swim, but I can *paddle*," peering doubtfully over; "but it is rather deep, is it not?" It is Nellie who wishes to paddle.

"Rather!" he answers, grimly. "I don't know of any way but for me to go over and bring back a boat. You can sit down and wait."

"Oh, no! no! don't leave me. Somebody will see us, won't they?"

"Perhaps so," he answered, rather sulkily. His clothes are splashed, his gloves torn, his boots hopelessly ruined. The moon passed into a cloud and a chill vapor seemed to be gathering.

"Mr. Henderson!" a pathetic voice piped at his side.

"Well?" He stopped and looked down at the little, quivering, slim figure at his elbow. He felt her tremble as she touched him.

"You are cold." He took off his coat and wrapped it around her. She was too thoroughly chilled to more than faintly protest.

"Mr. Henderson, I am very sorry I brought you here."

"It doesn't matter," he answered, chivalrously. "That is, it doesn't matter about me. I am rather afraid you will get a chill."

"I hope so! I deserve it!" You see," she went on, dropping her head guiltily, "I meant to annoy you. I was a little, just a little, angry because you did not wish to dance with me at first."

"Oh!" vouchsafed Mr. Henderson.

"You know I have everything my own way at home. Nobody crosses me, nobody disputes me. If I want the moon, I have only to cry for it, and it is brought to me. Charles did not wish me to come down here, but I cried and made a fuss, and had my own way, as usual."

"I suppose it is very pleasant having one's own way always," responded her listener, politely. "Pleasant for you, at least."

"Don't you think so?" she returned, rather sadly. "Sometimes I think it is very bad for me. If I were to set my heart on anything, any great wish which I could not get, it would be all the harder for me, because I do not know what it is to be refused. I should do something dreadful!"

"Don't set your heart on anything you are not likely to get, then. It is the only safe plan. Halloa-a-a!"

This last exclamation, which came near having the effect of making Nellie fall into the sea again, was directed to forms dimly seen on the opposite beach.

"What is the trouble?" came promptly across.

"Send a boat over at once! A lady is near perishing with cold! Quick there!"

Fifteen minutes afterwards the shivering fugitives sneaked—Henderson actually felt that he *sneaked* into the hotel, and he was, moreover, certain that twelve pairs of oxen would not be strong enough to draw him to that particular beach again, after the sun had set, in company with a woman.

"Be sure you take something hot before you go to bed," he said, as they parted. "A dose of brandy would be the best thing, and even then you will be lucky if you escape an illness."

"You are quite sure you forgive me," she murmured.

For answer he took her hand, would have carried it to his lips—who knows?—but she snatched it away with a frightened air, and ran up the stairs to where Ellice was waiting, scolding, frightened.

And in his distant home a white-haired old man, drawing the curtain back from his window, looked out into the moonlit night with a tender smile, and murmured: "God keep my darling from all harm!"

CHAPTER III.

ON THE BRINK.

One day follows another very much the same. It is a trite observation, but a true one. We eat, and drink, and dress, of necessity. If we get enough of the eating and drinking, with a sufficient variety of good company, to satisfy the inner being, and enough of the dressing to make beautiful the outer, a reasonable person ought to be satisfied.

Nellie Childersohn, at Newport, found the eating, and drinking, and dressing to be uncommonly pleasant pastime. The days fled all too swiftly, but not many had passed, before the little world around her began to observe, that wherever Nellie was, there Mr. Henderson was sure to be, also. Some laughed, some sneered; his friends said, "Henderson is getting awfully sweet on that little Childersohn"—and busy life went on. Was it their business that they should interfere to save the little woman's feet from the dark ways to come?

Once or twice Mrs. Shrewsbury's tone, or a glance from her scornful eyes, sounded a note of warning that sent Henderson away for a time to meditate upon his own surpassing folly; but he was sure to come back again for the next walk or drive. And Nelly accepted his devotion gravely and sweetly. The old trick of quick blushes, and the shy, backward glance over her shoulder, had not left her, but she was perfectly calm, otherwise.

One afternoon a letter comes which stirs the tardy conscience.

Lulled by such gentle gales to peaceful dreams, Mr. Childersohn bids his darling come home. He is lonely, ill at ease, and should his darling stay away from him any longer? She *must* come home.

Nellie reads the letter once, twice; then, with a deep groan, she throws her arms out, and bends her head on them, on the table. Martha, the maid, coming in, finds her in that position, her face hidden in the folds of her streaming yellow hair.

"Good Lord, ma'am! are you sick?" Martha cries, horrified.

Her words rouse Nellie to a sense of the proprieties to be observed, no matter what heartache she may have. She lifts a face, from which all the girlish bloom has faded, and, with trembling hands, binds up her hair. A dead rose lies on the window-sill. How like it is to her face, now that its tender flush is gone.

"I am not sick, but I have a headache. I think, if you will bring me my hat, I will take a run in the fresh air."

She is a long time getting herself ready. She tries a shawl, and then a cape; draws on her gloves, and then takes them off, always with a grave, absent face. At length she is attired, and goes slowly down the stairs.

Karl is lounging in the reading-room.

He sees the slight figure coming down the stairs, and, by a dexterous circuit through side doors and passages, intercepts it on the broad piazza.

"Are you going for a walk? It is rather late, is it not?" he says.

"I dare say it is. Nevertheless, I am going," she answers, shortly.

"If you will wait a moment, I will accompany you."

She looks, at first, as if she were inclined to bid him stay where he is. Then she changes her mind.

"Very well. Come along, then."

It seems that, since their first meeting, it has always been her fate to say "Come along," to him.

He asks her to wait a moment, while he gets his hat and puts off his light coat for one more suitable to the outdoor, evening air. When he joins her on the walk her face is still grave, and it is very pale.

Without a word, she led him on by a straggling path winding out into the dim country. The murmur of the town is lost behind them; the straggling houses grow few and far between; the uncut summer grass waved uncomfortably high on either side the path.

"Rather desolate, is it not?"

"I don't know. I have not looked."

Karl's face flushes. His attempts at conversation have not been well received, and he begins defiantly to whistle.

"I wish you would not make that irritating noise," flashes out Nellie.

Karl laughs out. He finds his temper as Nellie loses hers.

"Very well, I won't whistle. But you must remember I tried to talk, and you wouldn't. You were not good natured."

The bright head droops. A sigh struggles up, and stirs, ever so softly, her lip; but, faint as it is, Karl hears it, and draws a step nearer.

"I hope you are not in trouble," he says, anxiously. "Are you ill? Have you heard bad news?"

"I am not ill," she answers, "but I have got a letter that does not please me. I am to go home to-morrow."

"Oh!"

That single ejaculation falls from Karl's lips, and then he is silent. They are both silent, but their silence is very eloquent.

"So you are going!" he says, at last, lightly. "Well, we must all go, sooner or later. And, I must confess, your departure will be pretty sure to accelerate my own by a week or two."

She turns and faces him with cold, bright eyes. Never, in all their days of tender intercourse, since their brief acquaintance began, has her face worn such a look to him before.

"Don't misunderstand me," he says, quietly, and again a silence falls between them.

Tramp, tramp, tramp. Their feet seem to be beating a curious *reveille* on the hard, smooth earth.

"Tell me about your home," he says, at last, gently. "You have never described it to me."

Alas! it is the one thing she has never spoken to him about. All other things she has been frank and free to speak of, but her husband she has never mentioned. Ellice told him that night that Nellie was an old man's darling—nothing more.

"There is very little to tell you," Nellie answers, coldly. "There are three of us in the family. We usually have breakfast at eight o'clock. After that, my husband goes to his office and reads, and my sister Jennie and I play at work in the garden or kitchen. We have dinner, in the summer, at two o'clock. Sometimes, on rare occasions, we make an afternoon visit; sometimes we play at games. But, oh, it is so dull, *so* dull! and this——"

Karl does not speak for a while. A great flood of tender sympathy, more tender than any amount of love could be, makes his heart ache for her. She is so young, so beautiful. Life might be made so warm and sweet, so bright with the "color of rose" of love.

"You must ask me down there some day," he ventures, presently.

"No," she answers, resolutely. "I shall never ask you there. You must not expect it. You must not come."

He knows that it is better so, and makes no protest. They stalk along, he on one side of the path, she on the other. But, looking over at her in the dim light, he sees the tears flashing on her cheeks.

"Child, child!" he says, pityingly, "why did we meet, to cause all this sorrow of parting? For myself, it does not matter, but I hate to see you suffer. Why did we meet?"

"Because I would have my will," she answers, bitterly. "They warned me not to come, but I would. I had my will, as usual. I had my will!"

"Perhaps—sometime in the future," he stammered, hardly knowing what he says, moved by her tears and pathetic voice.

But she lifts her hand, warningly. Her face grows white and stern.

"Stop! Not one word like that. I will not hear it," she says.

So with trembling feet they drew near the gulf; they walk round and round it, and, shuddering, peer over into its dark depths; but some feeling—conscience, honor; call it what you will—holds them back, and keeps them from making the fatal plunge.

"Had we not better go back?" he asks. "You will tire yourself out."

"I wish to tire myself out. It is what I came for."

Nevertheless she turns, and they retraced their steps. How fair the scene is about them. A strange stillness has fallen down over the quaint, old, sleepy town. Their footsteps echo loudly through the lonely streets.

They hurry on and on, and Nellie stops at length, and holds out a trembling hand.

"We must say good-bye here," she says. "I would rather go back to the hotel alone."

Karl is embarrassed by a sense of the proprieties which she does not seem to remember. He does not like to leave her without companionship at that hour of the night, but someway he has not the courage to say so.

"Very well, then. You are sure you won't get lost?"

"Lost! no; not but what I can find myself again."

He stands silent.

"Go!" she cries, impatiently. "Why do you wait here, when I tell you to go?"

"But, I shall see you again?" says Karl, inquiringly. "In the morning?"

"No!" she flashes out, angrily. "I tell you we must say good-bye now, and you must go away from me, forever. The steamer leaves in an hour or two—you are a man, and have all the world for your home. You must not stay to be in my way to-morrow. I could not bear it. Go to-night." Her voice rises hysterically.

"I really don't see the necessity," he answers, a little sulkily. He hates being hurried—he hates the fuss of packing up, of a sudden departure. "I should not be in your way. I would not trouble you."

"You would! I will not run the risk! Promise me that you will go."

And seeing the misery in her face as she looks up, flushed and tearful, he promises. Words have no part in their farewell. He turns and goes silently.

But after he had gone, a great passion of regret seizes her—regret that she has parted with him so coldly. In all the dim future stretching out before her, whether weeks, or months, or years to come, it is probable that she may never see him more. Why, then, was she so chary of a farewell word? We do not part with the dying so coldly; we have kisses, tears, wild exclamations of love and tenderness; and is not her parting and Karl's as eternal for this world, as if death were dividing them?

Then a wild longing to hear his voice, to feel the touch of his hand once more, takes possession of her, and she starts and runs quickly along the street. She may be in time to see him before he goes, to say good-bye, and wish him God-speed on the journey of life. There will be no sin in that.

As she runs, panting, stopping now and then for breath, for her great excitement has weakened her, a voice calls from out the shadow of the trees, and for a moment her heart seemed to stand still.

"Nellie! Nellie!"

CHAPTER IV.

"WHERE IS MY DARLING?"

There is great rejoicing in Mr. Childersohn's household, for the pretty bird that winged its flight away so gayly three short weeks ago, is coming back to the home-nest to-day. At least, a telegram has been received to that effect. It says, "Coming home to-morrow," and is signed "Ellice." It was sent yesterday, but as the telegraph wires do not run through Torpidtown, it stopped at Hudson, the nearest station, slept over night, and was fetched in the stage this morning with the daily mail.

Telegraph dispatches sent to Torpidtown have an irritating habit of coming in this way, as if it were of no consequence whatever. In case of death or disaster, it is doubted a special messenger might be employed to hurry the tidings on, but there is no precedent to warrant a positive assertion.

The telegram which Mr. Childersohn reads with such a beaming face is mercilessly brief and cold. But these electric messages always are. The words seem to catch something of the hard nature of the wires over which they slip. We get the bare, bald facts, which it is necessary we should know, robbed of the graceful verbiage of affection, the expressions of pity, or congratulation, or love, which clothe the sentiment sent in letters, as foliage wreathes a bare bough.

"Three weeks!" said Mr. Childersohn, folding the paper. "She has been gone three weeks, Jennie. I dare say the dear child is wild with joy at the thought of being home again. But I did not think Mrs. Shrewsbury would return with her."

"Don't you think it a little strange that she sent the message at all?" asks Jennie, doubtingly. "It was not necessary. She must know we would be ready to welcome her, no matter how unexpectedly she can."

"I dare say she was anxious I should be here to meet her. She knows that I am in the habit of leaving home occasionally, when business calls me unexpectedly to town, and was unwilling to run the risk of my being absent at such a happy time.

"Perhaps so," said Jennie, thoughtfully.

Mr. Childersohn is absent from home, on an average, one day out of a hundred. On such rare occasions as he goes he comes back with an alacrity that proves the charm his own fireside has for him. He takes his ease at no wayside inn, and Nellie surely could have no misgivings on that score.

"No doubt she would have come home before this," continues Mr. Childersohn, rubbing one hand softly over the other, "only she was just a little ashamed to let us see what a spoiled child she is. Well, we will not laugh at her for her folly, no matter how richly she deserves it."

His complacent mood jars on Jenny, and she goes out to the kitchen hastily to give Mrs. Crump directions concerning the day's dinner. Mrs. Crump is the housekeeper. As she ruled Mr. Childersohn in his bachelor days, so she rules Mr. Childersohn in his household now. Jennie, and even Mrs. Nellie, are but ciphers in the estimation of this autocrat of the kitchen.

When Jennie returns to the parlor its master is still there. He looks over at her with an expression of benignant interest.

"Do you think, Jennie, we might ask a few friends in to meet Nellie to-day, as a sort of festival in honor of her return?"

"I'm sure I don't know whom we could ask, even if it were advisable. There are so few families we visit here."

"There is the minister's family for one," suggests Mr. Childersohn.

"I'm afraid they would not come," answers Jennie, blushing and hanging her head. "The last time they were here Mrs. Fordham asked Nellie why she did not come to church, and Nellie answered that the sermons were so dreadfully dull they sent her to sleep. They have not been here since."

"It is possible they may come, after all; and there are the Williamses," pursues Mr. Childersohn, and unconsciously falling into a vulgarism in his eagerness.

"The four oldest of the Williams children have the measles, and as the youngest is only six weeks old I am afraid we can't depend on Mrs. Williams to come out," Jennie answers, gravely.

Mr. Childersohn has not the courage to keep up this pursuit of pleasure under difficulties. With a gentle sigh he drops the subject and walks over to the window.

It is a dull, depressing, late summer day. One of those quick changes of weather, from extreme heat to cold, which are so common in the hill country of New York State, has come round during the night. There is a suspicion of frost in the air. The leaves rustle coldly. The wind growls ominously; it starts up, and then dies away; it seems at times to blow from all quarters at once, much like an ill-tempered person flouncing from room to room.

"I am so sorry the day is so dull; it may seem to Nellie rather lonesome coming from a crowded watering-place here. Do you think, Jennie, I had better write to Pamphlet Brothers to send up some books?"

A gentle, musing look comes into his eyes as his thoughts turn to the past. There is this difference between the old and the young: the old are always looking backward. "How happy I was that day! Oh, if I could only go back to that time!" "How happy I shall be to-morrow, or the next day, or the next!" youth sighs. It is always looking forward. Is it well that the two should be linked together in the marriage bond when they walk in such opposite ways?

"Two years ago to-day Nellie and I were married, Jennie. Do you remember?" asks Mr. Childersohn, suddenly.

Jenny puts her hand over her eyes with a quick sob. The words, few though they are, bring before her a scene which it is bitter for her to recall. Tears and memory so often go together, like sisters in woe.

"I remember," she says, faintly.

She remembers a lonely hotel in a lonelier hill-country district, and a man dying in one of the long, low, dismal chambers. Two girls watch over him, counting every pulse, with dreadful expectation in their pale faces. That man was her father. The two girls are Nellie and herself.

"I remember," she sighs; but she would give worlds to forget.

Mr. Allston and Mr. Childersohn had been early friends—educated together, and holding kindred aims and aspirations. Mr. Allston married early, and, with a pretty, helpless wife, set sail upon an ever-widening sea of troubles. His wife faded prematurely; became fretful and full of an invalid's nervous fancies. It was, "Richard, I want this," and "Richard, I must have that." Well for him that his true love for her made the task of providing for all her numerous progeny of wants an easier one than it would otherwise have been.

Meanwhile, their two girls grew up—heaven knows how such girls do grow up!—beautiful, refined, with dainty tastes and cultured minds. How such people, with no apparent income, keep the wolf from the door, is one of the mysteries of modern society. Then the wife died, and Mr. Allston's strength, undermined by all these years of worry, gave way. The physician ordered him into the country, anywhere out of the close town air.

Mr. Allston followed the advice, which was his death warrant. The bracing air of the hills struck on his weakened lungs with the force of a blow, and a blood-vessel gave way. Jennie remembers how in those days of agony Mr. Childersohn came, and falling in love with Nellie's sweet face, asks to make her his wife. A smile, such as had not brightened Mr. Allston's face for years, lightened it in his dying hour, as he faltered out:

"God bless you, old friend; to know that my darlings will be cared for takes the sting away from death."

How the wind rises. Jennie remembers Nellie's cry of passionate despair as she flung herself upon her father's breast.

"Father, father, save me! save me from such a fate! I cannot marry him! He is so old! I do not love him! Save me! save me!"

"Child!" answered the dying man, faintly, "promise me this! Remember I have not one penny in all the world to leave you. You are so helpless, so beautiful! He will care for you; he will give you a home."

How the wind cries at the window. Jennie recalls Nellie's wild sobs as she flings herself upon the floor, beating her lovely head on the cold boards like a rebellious child.

"Let me die, too! I don't want to live. Let me die! oh! oh!"

Then, the fierce passion all spent, her strength gone, she listens as they convince her of the duty that lies before her, and silently gives assent to their plans. When Mr. Childersohn comes to claim his bride she is whiter than the rose in her hair, but he attributes her pallor to grief and watching. Jennie remembers that dreadful marriage ceremony in the dying man's chamber; she hears, along with the solemn words, the dash of rain, the clamp of horses' feet on the wet stones under the window, as the teamsters drive by and stop to gossip a moment at the bar.

"God bless you, Nellie," says the dying father.

"Don't you think, Jennie, that you had better speak to Mrs. Crump about the dinner? Our little lady will bring back some delicate fancies, and we must do our best to please her to-day." It is Mr. Childersohn's voice breaking in on Jennie's dismal reveries.

"I have seen Mrs. Crump already. But breath used in giving Mrs. Crump directions about dinner is breath wasted. She never obeys them."

The great clock in the hall ticks the lagging hours away. The moments go, one after the other; we cannot keep one of them back, not one. Ah, Heaven! what would not a human soul give at times if it could stop those golden sands that slip so mercilessly into the ocean of eternity. "Farewell!" they seem to say. "We go! farewell! farewell!"

At length the stage rolls up to the gate. Mr. Childersohn, who had sighted it on the brow of the hill, hurries to the door and stands with his hand on the lock. His face is faintly flushed. His tall form is robed in black, and with his soft white hair falling on his shoulders, he looks every inch the patrician gentleman.

The driver springs down and assists a lady, a large imperial-looking lady, to alight. Then some baggage is deposited on the grass by the gate, and the stage rolls away. Mr. Childersohn, who has waited shyly till he shall see Nellie's face before he appears, stands bewildered. He looks at Ellice, then at the fast disappearing stage, and back again. Mrs. Shrewsbury hurries into the house.

"Where is Nellie?" cries Mr. Childersohn. "Has she gone on? Is it some trick she is playing? Why has Nellie not come with you?"

Ellice is very pale. Her eyes, those dark, scornful eyes that in her time have seen so much of the folly, the weakness, the wickedness of life, are full of sympathetic tears. She lays her hand on Mr. Childersohn's arm.

"You must be strong," she says. "I have dreadful news to tell you. Can you bear it? You are left terribly alone. Oh, how can I tell him!" she cries, turning to Jennie, who stands speechless beside her.

"What is it?" he asks, shaking. "What has happened? Where is my darling?"

Ellice's lips quiver; she cannot speak; but he reads in her face the tidings of his awful bereavement. Nellie will not come back to him again.

"Nellie! my darling! dead! dead!"

The fearful thought of death, only death, is in his mind.

He drops into a chair, and flinging his arms out upon the table, he bends his face down sobbing. His white hair falls a piteous sight over his outstretched arms!

"Dead! dead! my darling! oh, my darling!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

WINTER WINDS.—There is something wild and weird in the sound of the loud winds that whistle around our dwellings in the night time at the present season. They are mournful, and they bear on their swift wings the memories of other days. They remind us of faces that have vanished forever from our view, and of firesides where the ashes are cold now. They appeal to us for charity, for we know that they come past the widow without fuel, and poor and orphan children with scanty clothing and scanty fare. Let us listen to the mournful winter winds, and while they make us sad, be taught by them to do what lies in our power to make other hearts more cheerful.

HEAD AND HEART.

BY J. R. C.

"Heart," quoth Head, "thou'rt ever fretting,
Panting evermore,
Beating like a netted linnet
'Gainst its prison door.
Say, how can I give thee quiet,
All thy troubles say,
For this never-ceasing riot
Wears my peace away."

"Head," said Heart, "I'm very weary.
Living all alone,
Dwelling, like a sculptur'd maiden,
In a vault of stone.
Choose me some heart that will listen
To love's gentle lore;
Laugh and weep with, aye be near me.
Leave me nevermore."

GENTLEMAN DICK;

OR,

The Cruise of the Dolphin!

A Story of Scenes and Adventures in the North Pacific.

By Captain Clewline.

[This serial was commenced in No. 13, Vol. 54. Back numbers can be obtained from all newsdealers throughout the United States, or direct from this office.]

CHAPTER XXIV.

A BLIND WHALE.

Dick Fenton had hit the truth; the huge whale was blinded, and in a singular way.

We have said that the outer skin of the whale is impervious to pain, and it might be said that the entire blanket or envelope of blubber is in the same condition.

For this reason, barnacles, and every description of parasite shell-fish, fasten themselves to the rough outer coat with impunity, as the whale does not feel them.

Some of my readers have doubtless seen barnacles—bunches of lily-shaped shells—as they have been taken from the bottom of a ship after a three years' cruise. When first deposited they are small, but increase in size and number as the years go by. This particular whale was very old, and his head was literally encrusted with these shells. As they increased in size and number, those which had been deposited near the eyes of the whale had formed a sort of curtain over the small eyes, making him, in effect, perfectly blind, although his eyes were in as good condition as ever.

Dick pointed out this fact to the mate, who uttered a cry of surprise.

"By George!" he said, "I believe you are right, Dick. Put me on him again, my lads, and as I am sure he can't see me, I am certain to touch the life this time. Put me on his black back, I say."

The boat crept up cautiously, the mate holding his lance in his strong, brown hands. They reached the side of the whale, which lay upon the surface of the water, having exhausted his prodigious strength in his efforts to find the boat. The mate placed the point of his lance against the side of the patriarch at a particular point, holding the shaft at a certain angle, and made a vigorous lunge, burying the heavy lance half way in the body of the whale. Instantly, there shot up into the air a column of water, red with blood, and the boat darted back out of reach to watch the unutterable agony of the dying whale.

Who can tell how long he had roamed these seas, gathering strength and weight as the years went by? No man can guess at the age of the whale with any degree of certainty. How they die, or where they go when old age reaches them, if indeed they die, we cannot tell. Old sailors say that they never die, but we know that everything created has an end at last.

The flurry of such a giant must be fearful, and Dick had a strange feeling in his heart as he thought that his harpoon had brought the monster to his death. We have told how a great whale dies, and will not repeat it, but one who has seen it can never forget his first sensations at the wonderful sight. The boat lay idly rocking on the water, and the men watched the dying whale, for they could not tell at what moment he might dash at them in his blind fury. The spray flew high in the air every time he hurled his huge bulk out of the sea and fell again. Sometimes he seemed to stand erect upon his flukes; then his head was plunged into the sea, and the flukes whistled through the air.

"It is awful to look at," said Dick. "I never thought that I should take part in the death of one of these gigantic creatures, and it seems strange."

"That ends it," said the mate.

The whale gave one dying leap, and fell into the sea. There he lay, lifeless, inert, never more to roam through his native seas, monarch of his race. Half an hour later they were towing back, while the captain's boat followed, dragging another huge whale. Forsythe had been compelled to cut loose from the animal he had struck in order to save the crew, and the other boat had not been able to strike anything; so that these two boats coupled up, one with Weston's and one with the captain's boat, and moved toward the ship, which they reached just as the sun was going down. All through that beautiful evening they worked hard, and when the first watch turned in the Dolphin was standing erect upon the sea, with a great whale upon either side, waiting for the cutting-spades in the morning.

While they were at this work next day a sail hove in sight, and bore down upon them rapidly.

"A limejuicer," said Mr. Weston, looking at the stumpy topmasts. "You can't fool me on them, and, if I ain't mistaken, it is the same Britisher we stole the whale from the other day when Tatty made his big throw."

The Englishman backed his topsails and lowered a boat; and, shortly after, the English captain boarded the Dolphin, looking wistfully at the huge whales chained upon each side.

"You have deuced good luck, captain," he said; "I'm not more than half full, and I've been out two seasons. I am Captain Cairncross, of the Briton, out of Liverpool."

"Manning is my name, and I command the Dolphin. Yes, we have been lucky, and when we cut in those whales you will have a clear field, as far as any trouble we will give you, as we shall be full to the hatches and sail for Honolulu."

"I've came on a strange errand, Captain Manning. Two days ago we were boarded by a boat from a fore-and-aft schooner, the Antelope, and the captain asked about you."

"What is his name?"

"Dunlap."

"Walter Dunlap! I'm glad he has got a craft of his own, for he deserved it. What luck has he had?"

"He is not fitted out as a whaler. On the contrary, he looks more like a revenue cruiser, blamed if he don't. He says that he is out after a boy who was kidnapped on board this ship, or ran away to sea, and he has been looking for you this four months."

"I don't know how the boy was sent on board, but he is here, and one of the best men I have in my ship. And Walt is looking for him, eh? Now, see here. If you cross his hause again, you tell him to steer for Honolulu, for I'll leave the boy there to wait for him."

"All right. I did not think you would hold him, when you knew the truth. Now, I'd like to see your first mate, Mr. Daniel Forsythe."

"Here he is," said Captain Manning. "This way, Dan."

Forsythe came forward slowly, with a look of indecision in his eyes.

"I've got a letter for you, sir," said the English captain, handing him a stained envelope.

He opened it hastily, and read two lines in a handwriting which he knew well.

"Be quick and sure; his friends are on the track. They must never find him! Ten thousand dollars shall be yours.

"MR. PHILLIPS."

The paper shook in the hands of the mate, and a mist swam before his eyes. He felt that he could spare the boy no longer, with safety to himself.

CHAPTER XXV.

OVERBOARD.

The "cutting in" completed, and the huge heads deprived of their wealth, the Dolphin cut loose from the bodies of the whales, and sailed away towards Honolulu, the trying-pots steaming as she went. The captain and crew were in high glee, for they had done what few ships ever have done, "filled" in the first season's cruise. It must not be supposed that on this account Captain Manning would leave the whaling grounds for home. On the contrary, his chief object in visiting Honolulu at this time was to leave his cargo, and go back to the whaling grounds. At Honolulu it would not be difficult to ship his surplus oil on some unlucky whaler which was forced to return; or, at best, it could lie in bulk at Honolulu until they could come back, or send a chartered ship to bring it home.

While upon the whaling ground the weather had been magnificent. All hands had not been sent aloft for months; but now, as for the first time they turned their prow toward port, the sky began to look threatening. The first night was dark, with cold puffs of wind from the north, and through the next day they were forced to beat against baffling head winds, which drove them out of their proper course again and again. Night came on again, the sun going down in a bank of lead-colored clouds to the north.

Forsythe had the watch, and Dick was on deck, although he was in the starboard watch. Several times he caught the glance of the mate's black eyes fixed upon him with a strange, intent glance, and those eyes troubled him. Why did he look at him in that way, and what had he done to make him angry? The mate had used him well for some months; indeed, he had given him no chance to find fault, and the boy did not know what to think.

Forsythe was trying to force himself, against his own inclinations, to take the life of this brave boy. Dick had won upon him day by day, until, in spite of himself, the lad was a favorite with him. But the temptation was awful, and it was hard to resist.

Ten thousand dollars!

It took his breath away, as he thought what he could do with ten thousand dollars, all his own money. Besides, he had kidnapped the boy, and he did not know what the law might do with him if Dick reached home in safety.

The Dolphin was prepared for a storm, as Captain Tom was too old a sailor to risk anything in such threatening weather, and with such a cargo as he had between decks. She was running under close-reefed main and foresails, with double-reefed topsails, storm-jib, and staysail. Now and then the eye of the mate went aloft to see that everything was in trim, for he was a good sailor, whatever his failings might be, and loved his ship. The gray bank of clouds in which the sun went down were creeping up slowly, and there was a peculiar hush in nature, the silence which comes before the storm.

"Do you think it is coming on to blow, Mr. Forsythe?" said Dick, touching his cap.

"Going to blow great guns, my lad. But what do we care, with such a deck as this under our feet? Never fear for the old Dolphin, Dick, she is staunch and true, and will carry us safe into port. Dick, my lad, I want to ask you something. Come to the quarter-deck, where I can speak to you alone."

Dick followed him respectfully, with his cap in his hand, and stood in an attitude of attention, waiting for the mate to speak.

"I suppose you think that I have been mighty rough on you in this cruise?"

"Well, Mr. Forsythe, I will say this much. I don't greatly admire the way you took to get me on board, nor do I understand your reasons for doing it. At the same time, if you ask me whether I am sorry that I have made this voyage, I can only say, no. I have learned a great deal, and would not lose the knowledge I have for any year's training in college."

"Then you don't feel very hard toward me, now?"

"No sir; I do not."

"Let us suppose a case, Dick. Say that we get safe back to New Bedford, and you had the chance to get revenge on me for what you think I have done; what would you do?"

"I might tell you that you had been wicked in kidnapping me as you did."

"Would you take the law of me?"

"What for?"

"To get revenge, of course."

"Oh, pshaw! What do I want to law you for, Mr. Forsythe. Don't I tell you that I am not at all sorry I came."

"Do you mean that?" demanded the mate, eagerly.

"I'll give you my hand on it, and when Dick Fenton shakes hands on a bargain, that bargain always holds good."

"Then you are a mighty good fellow, and I am sorry for what I have done. See here. I never break a promise, if it is a good one, and I tell you now, that I promise to be your friend, and when I say that, I mean a great deal. I lose ten thousand dollars by it, though."

"Ten thousand dollars! How do you lose ten thousand dollars by me?"

"I'm not going to tell you now, but one of these days, perhaps, I may. I'll speak to the captain, and tell him enough, so that he will make you free of the cabin."

"I don't want to be free of the cabin. You leave me in the forecastle until I leave the ship, for I have friends there that will stand by me to the death."

"You would not make a friend of me, I suppose," said Dan, sadly.

"Why not?" said Dick, extending his hand.

"Wait," said the mate, putting his hands behind him. "Don't do anything rash, or shake hands with a man like me out of sentiment. I not only kidnapped you on board this ship, but I promised the man who employed me to put you out of the way."

"To kill me, in fact," said Dick, very coolly.

"Not exactly that, but to see that you did not get back home. At first I meant to do it by leaving you in some desolate place, far from home, unless some accident happened to you. After that I thought of killing you outright."

"What had I ever done to you?"

"Nothing; that is the reason you cannot take my hand. You see before you a man who consented to do a bad, cruel deed, for the sake of one he loved. See here: I have been engaged to a young lady in New Bedford for three years, the daughter of a sea captain; but the captain says he will not allow us to marry until I can show five thousand dollars clear money. In an evil hour this temptation came, and I yielded to it, for it gave me the money I wanted, and the money gave me Ellen. I have been a fool—a coward—and I do not deserve her."

"Take my hand," said Dick. "I still offer it to you."

"No, no; I set Black Rodger on you, and he nearly took your life."

"Take my hand, I say; I have forgiven you. As you have repented, as no man ever repented in all time, I know how sorry you are. Once for all, will you take my hand?"

Forsythe dashed his brown hand into that of the boy, with desperate force.

"There 'tis, then; but I never thought to do it. We will be friends from this hour, and I will guard you as the tiger guards his young. What is that? Bishop and Farley, to the wheel! Let her go before the wind."

The gale, which had been gathering with unparalleled fury for two days, burst suddenly upon them. The Dolphin trembled through every timber of her frame, and made a leap which nearly threw her on her beam-ends, while a great sea swept over her decks. But the men at the wheel were old salts, and met her in time, and the tall masts of the Dolphin rose slowly from the surge, the water dropping from every inch of cordage below the crosstrees. Tons of water had swept across her decks, but the hatches had been battened down, and although the forecastle and cabin were flooded, the hold did not receive a drop of water. Forsythe only saved himself from being swept overboard by flinging himself upon the deck, and holding on by the combings. For a moment all on the deck were blinded by the dashing flood, and then, as the ship righted, and Forsythe dashed the water from his eyes, he heard a faint cry from the black waves alongside.

"Man overboard!" he shouted. "Heavens! it is Dick Fenton."

It was only too true. That which he had failed to do, which had been too much for Philip Fenton and for Black Rodger Bates, that one sweeping wave had accomplished. Gentleman Dick, the pet of the crew, was adrift and helpless in the darkness, amid the dashing waves of the North Pacific.

CHAPTER XXVI.

TATTY'S FORGIVENESS.

Forsythe uttered a cry of agony, which pierced through the darkness of the night with strange earnestness. He had not been false when he said that he wished to be a friend to the young harpooner; on the contrary, he really repented the wrong which he had done, and meant to do his best to set it right; and now, at the moment when he had conquered himself, a wave had robbed him of the opportunity to set himself right.

"Man overboard!"

A strange sound amid the darkness, a human body wrestling with the mad water, a human soul in agony. It was his work—his! In spite of shallow sophistry, he knew that no one save himself could be blamed.

An iron hand grasped him by the shoulder, and he saw the dark face of Tatty close to his own.

"You have done it at last!" hissed the harpooner. "You have cast away the only being I care for or love on earth or sea, and now you shall go with him."

"Hands off!" screamed Forsythe. "Why stop to take your vengeance now, when *he* may be saved?"

"You are right," cried Tatty. "My vengeance can wait."

The sailors began to fling overboard loose articles which might serve to bear up the drowning boy until they could aid him. After the first cry, no sound was heard, and to their utter surprise the gale ceased as suddenly as it had begun, and the Dolphin no longer rushed on before the mighty wind, but lay-to with her mainsail aback, making no way, except the drift.

"Man a boat!" cried Forsythe. "Who will go with me to save Gentleman Dick?"

Not a man on that deck was unwilling, but Tatty was first in the boat, and with him stout Sam Tully, Congo Ned, and Kanaka Joe, three of the best men in the ship. The boat went down into the water with a splash, and darted away from the ship's side.

"Pull easy, boys," said Forsythe, in a voice of agony. "Ahoy-y-y-y! Keep up, if you hear us, Dick."

No answer came back save the splash of water as the boat was lifted high in the air, upon the crest of a mighty wave. The darkness was intense, so intense that it seemed as if it could be cut.

"Pull starboard," said Dan. "I tell you, Tatty, that if I can save that boy by giving my own life, I'll save him. He had taken my hand at the moment when the wave struck us, and had forgiven me all I ever did to wrong him. The men on deck will tell you that."

"I saw you shaking hands," said Sam Tully.

"Pull hard now, boys; keep out of the trough of the sea, whatever you do," cried Forsythe.

Again his sonorous voice pealed out through the solemn stillness of the night. They waited, with uplifted oars, at each halloo, but no voice replied. Far away, in the darkness, the lights gleamed in the rigging of the Dolphin, set there to guide them back.

"I see something!" cried Forsythe. "Pull for your lives, boys."

They pulled as they had never pulled in a race for a whale, but when they reached the floating object in the water, they only found an empty watercask, which had been washed away by the wave which swept Dick off the deck.

"Pull to port," said Forsythe, with a groan. "I am afraid he is gone, boys. Brave swimmer as he is, he could not hold up long in such a sea as this. Shout altogether, and perhaps he may hear."

The boat's crew united in one wild shout, and then waited.

No answer came back, and they knew that the last hope was gone.

"Turn on your thwart, Tatty," said the mate. "Here is a pistol, loaded to the muzzle. You have said that you wanted your revenge."

"I must have it," was the hoarse reply, as he took the weapon in his clenched hand.

"Wait; before you take your vengeance, let me say something I have in my mind. I have plotted against this boy, and a week ago I should have felt happy if a wave had swept him from the deck. But to-night, by his noble conduct, he won my heart, and I would have given anything to save him. Do not let your revenge end with me, but seek out his brother, Philip Fenton, the man who hired me to kidnap him."

"His brother?"

"Yes; when you go back to the ship tell them that I fell overboard, and you could not find me. He is right to take his vengeance, mates; for although I had no hand in this, but for me, Dick Fenton would be well and happy in his mother's home."

The sharp click of the pistol-lock was heard in the darkness.

"A moment more; go to New Bedford, and find Captain Edward Drake. Tell him the same story of my death you tell on board the Dolphin, and tell him, too, that my last thought was of Ellen. Now, fire! Ellen, good-bye, until eternity."

They waited for the crack of the pistol, but it did not come.

"I must ask a question now," said the hoarse voice of Tatai Manutu. "You say that the boy forgave you?"

"On the oath of a dying man, he took my hand in friendship, and forgave me every wrong I had ever done him."

"And you were the hired agent of his brother, Philip Fenton?"

"Yes."

"Why did he wish him dead?"

"He was jealous of his good fortune in being favored by a rich uncle. I do not think that Philip hoped that his uncle would leave the property to him, if Dick were dead; but he was determined that his younger brother should never enjoy it."

They heard the sound of a splash in the water, and Tatty took up his oar.

"What have you done; why don't you fire?"

"I have thrown away the pistol. The brave lad who is gone forgave you, and why should I not copy his noble act? Pull away, lads; all hope is over."

"Good for you, Tatty!" cried the men. "Forgive and forget, for the sake of the dead."

It was a hard pull to the Dolphin, for they had gone with the sea, and had to pull back against it. Imagine the feelings of Daniel Forsythe, as he handled the steering oar, his chin sunk upon his bosom, and low groans bursting from his laboring breast. He had been forgiven by Dick; he had been forgiven by his avenger. He had not thought that such noble natures existed, for his hard life had generally brought him in contact with the worst side of human nature, and these things surprised him. The boat was nearly swamped in reaching the side of the Dolphin, but, after a great effort, they reached the deck in safety.

"It's no use, captain," said Forsythe, bursting into tears. "The poor fellow is gone; we done all we could to save him."

"I'd sooner have lost my right arm, for I suspect that great wrong has been done him by some one."

"Great wrong *has* been done, captain. Let us use every means to save him, and then I will tell you all about it, for I cannot bear the guilty burden in my breast."

All through that dark night, the Dolphin stood about, trying to keep as near as possible to the place where the gale struck them. When morning broke, the scattered articles which had been thrown overboard were out of sight, and they cruised about, here and there, to and fro, in the vain hope that they might find him, still clinging to some floating fragment. But they searched in vain, and it was late in the afternoon when Captain Manning reluctantly gave the order to bear up for Honolulu. There were sad hearts in the cabin of the Dolphin, but sadder yet in the forecastle, for the men had loved him well. They missed the nightly feast of sea-yarns with which he had passed away the hours off watch; and, most of all, Tatty missed him. His chest was not opened and sold to the men, as usual when a man is lost at sea, for the captain said that it should be carried home, and given to his friends. His empty bunk stood there, his harpoon hung in the brackets above it, and whenever they looked the seamen were reminded that his strong hand had struck his last and only whale, and that another must take up the harpoon where he laid it down.

Tatty would sit for hours upon his chest, looking gloomily at the empty bunk, and at times working at the lock of an old pistol, or feeling the edge of the bowie which Dick had given him.

"What do you do that for?" said Sam Tully.

"His name is Philip Fenton," muttered the harpooner prince. "Philip Fenton; I shall not forget his name."

Woe to Philip Fenton if they ever meet on land or sea.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE ANTELOPE MEETS THE BRITON.

Once more on board the Antelope, some days before the events recorded in our last chapter, three hundred leagues to the northward, where Captain Walter Dunlap still prosecuted his search for the Dolphin. He had boarded a hundred ships during the months he had been upon the sea, all to no purpose. Some of them had seen the Dolphin at a certain point, and when he sailed away in search it was only to find that the ship was gone, where he could not tell. He began to think that it would have been better if he had remained in the port of Honolulu, and there awaited the return of the Dolphin, but he had been ordered to cruise in search of her, and he obeyed strictly, as he had learned to do in the whaling service. The weeks crept into months, and still he was upon the sea, no nearer his object than ever.

Caspar Deane, since the day of his battle with the champion of the ship, was king of the forecastle, and in that capacity had even forced the men to accept the black-browed recruit who had joined them at Honolulu. The men swallowed the dose, but not the less they objected to the medicine, for their new messmate was anything save a pleasant companion. The two were together a great deal, and had things their own way in the forecastle, for Black Rodger had a strong arm and soon asserted his power.

"So you did not have a very pleasant time in the Dolphin," Caspar said to him one day as they sat in the foretop.

"Pleasant! Curse such a life as I led there! I got along well enough until I got into a muss with that boy."

"Dick Fenton?"

"Yes, curse him! See here, now; you want to make me talk about him, so as to call to my mind the way he thrashed me."

"He thrashed you, eh?"

"I should think he did, the young dog!"

"He is a boy, too. It seems as if a man ought to be ashamed to be beaten by a boy in a fair fight. But he knows how to use his hands, and I know who taught him."

"He'd give *you* a lively shake-up, Caspar," hissed Black Rodger, bending a dark look upon his companion.

"Umph! a mere boy, and you a man toughened by exposure and a reckless life. It is a queer thing that you let him escape you."

"I tried hard enough, and I don't give him up yet. Let me only meet him once more; that is all I ask."

"Sail, ho!" cried the lookout, and immediately the schooner headed for the stranger, as usual. When they came near enough the stumpy topmasts of the Briton could be discovered.

"It's the Englishman again," said Captain Dunlap, "and there goes a signal. He wants to speak us."

In an hour the schooner and brig were lying-to, and Dunlap leaped into his gig and quickly reached the Englishman.

"Glad to see you again, Captain Dunlap," said the captain; "I think I have put up the game for you."

"Have you seen the Dolphin."

"Yes."

"Did you board her?"

"Of course, and I found the boy you wanted all right. He is in high feather on board, and is a harpooner. They had two whales alongside, and the biggest one of the two was struck by that boy."

"He is getting on fast. Did you give my message to the captain?"

"Yes."

"And he said——"

"That he would sail for Honolulu in less than two days, and would wait for you there.

"Hurrah!" cried Captain Dunlap. "Then I am owner of the Antelope from this hour. Captain, I can't find words to thank you, but the news you have brought me is good news indeed. I must be off at once."

"Can't you stay long enough to crack a bottle of wine?"

"I cannot spare the time now, captain; but I thank you all the same."

He leaped at once into his boat, and sank into the sternsheets."

"Good-bye, Captain Cairncross; I will remember the Briton and her commander while I live. Ready, boys; let fall; give way."

The gig shot away from the side of the Briton, and quickly passed over the distance between her and the schooner. Ten minutes later, and the swift schooner was flying before the wind toward the south.

"The work is done, Mr. Wallace," the young captain said, "and you are richer by a thousand dollars than you were this morning. The Briton has spoken the Dolphin, and old Tom has promised to meet us in Honolulu within the next month. Crowd on all she can carry, for I am in a hurry."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE REVIEWER

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

RECEIVED FROM W. B. ZIEBER, Chestnut street, Philadelphia, "The Westminster Review and Edinburgh Review, for October, 1874," published by The Leonard Scott Publishing Co., New York. Both these numbers are unusually interesting.

FROM HURD & HOUGHTON, New York: The "Atlantic Monthly for December, 1874," the last number of the thirty-fourth volume.

FROM CLAXTON, REMSEN & HAFFELFINGER, Philadelphia: "Animal Mechanism; A Treatise on Terrestrial and Orial Locomotion," by E. J. Marey. This is the eleventh volume of the International Scientific Series, published by D. Appleton & Co., New York. The preparation of this series of popular works on science has been confided only to men of eminent ability, who are recognized authorities in their several departments.

HINTS FOR EVERYBODY.—The way to get credit is to be punctual; the way to preserve it is not to use it much. Settle often; have short accounts. Trust no man's appearance; appearances are deceitful, perhaps assumed for the purpose of obtaining credit. Beware of gaudy exteriors; rogues usually dress well. The rich are plain; trust him, if any one, who carries but little on his back. Never trust him who flies into a passion on being dunned, but make him pay quickly if there be any virtue in the law. Whenever you meet a man who is fond of argument, you will meet one profoundly ignorant of the operations of the human heart. Mind your own affairs. Let all the errors you see in other's management suggest correctness in your own.

To tell our secrets is generally folly, but that folly is without guilt; to communicate those with which we are entrusted is always treachery, and treachery for the most part combined with folly.

SAD WORDS.

BY BERNI.

The little threads break one by one
That bound my heart to thine;
Love's, like the silkworm's, web is spun—
As perilously fine.

It snaps beneath an angry word,
'Neath an unloving look;
Frowns are more trenchant than the sword,
Or Autumn's reaping-hook.

The maiden in the ceaseless mill
Watching the parting weft,
Stands ready to repair the ill
With fingers fast and deft.

But no fourth sister waits beside
Those fatal hands which sever
Life's clue, which like Love's thread untied,
Is join'd again, ah, never!

THE DARK HOUR.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY C. A. P.

"I can't stand it any longer, Jane; I'll go out, and perhaps something will turn up for us."

"It's a cold night, Robert."

"Cold, yes! But it's not much colder out than in. It would have been much better for you if you had married John Tremain," he said, bitterly.

"Don't say that, Robert; I've never regretted my choice."

"Not even where there is not a loaf of bread in the house for you and the children?"

"Not even now, Robert. Don't be discouraged. God has not forsaken us. Perhaps this Christmas Eve the tide will turn; better days may dawn upon us to-morrow."

Robert Brice shook his head despondingly.

"You are more hopeful than I, Jane. Day after day I have been in search of employment. I have called at fifty places, only to receive the same answer everywhere."

Just then little Jimmy, who had been asleep, woke up.

"Mother," he pleaded, "won't you give me a piece of bread? I am so hungry."

"There is no bread, Jimmy, darling," said the mother, with an aching heart.

"When will there be some?" asked the little child, piteously.

Tears came to the mother's eyes. She knew not what to do.

"Jimmy, I'll bring you some bread," said the father, hoarsely; and he seized his hat, and went to the door.

His wife alarmed, laid her hand upon his sleeve. She saw the look in his eyes; she feared to what step desperation might lead him.

"Remember, Robert," she said, solemnly, "it is hard to starve, but there are things that are worse."

He shook off her hand, but not roughly, and without a word, passed out.

Out in the cold street! There would be their only home next. For a brief time longer he had the shelter of a cheerless room, but the rent would become due at the end of the month, and he had nothing to meet it.

Robert Brice was a mechanic, competent and skillful. Three years since, he lived in a country village where his expenses were moderate, and he found no difficulty in meeting them. But in an evil hour he grew tired of his village home, and removed to the city. Here he vainly hoped to do better. For a while he met with very good success; but a time of great depression came, and with it a suspension of business enterprises. Work ceased for Robert Brice and many others. If he had been in his old home, he could have turned his hand to something else, and, at the worst, could have borrowed of his neighbor till better times. So day by day he went out to seek work, only to return disappointed. If he had been alone he could have got on somehow; but it was a sore trial to come to the cheerless room and his pale wife and hungry children, with no relief to offer them.

When, on that Christmas Eve, Robert Brice went into the streets, he hardly knew how he was going to redeem the promise he had made little Jimmy. He was absolutely penniless, and had been so for three days. There was nothing that he was likely to find to do that night.

"I will pawn my coat," he said. "I cannot see my wife and children starve."

It was a well worn overcoat, and that winter nigh he needed something more to keep him warm. Weakened by enforced fasting, he was more sensitive to the cold, and shivered as he walked along the pavement.

"Yes," he said, "my coat must go. I know not how I shall get on without it; but I cannot see the children starve before my eyes."

He was not in general an envious man; but when he saw sleek, well-fed men, buttoned up to the throat in warm overcoats, come out of the brilliantly lighted stores, provided with presents for happy children at home, while his were starving, he suffered some bitter thoughts, upon the inequality of fortune's gifts, to come to his mind. Why should they be so happy, while he was so miserable?

There was a time, he remembered it well, when he, too, suffered not the Christmas Eve to pass without buying some little gifts for Jimmy and Agnes. How little he dreamed that they should ever want bread!

There was one man, shorter than himself, warmly clad, who passed him with his hands thrust deep in the pockets of his overcoat. There was a pleasant smile upon his face. He was, doubtless, thinking of a happy circle at home.

Robert knew him as a rich cabinet-maker and upholsterer. He had applied to this man only two days before for employment, and been refused.

It was, perhaps, the thought of the wide difference between them, so far as outward circumstances were, that led Robert to follow him.

After a while, the gentleman—Mr. Grimes—drew his handkerchief from his pocket. As he did so, he did not perceive that his pocket-book came with it, and fell on the pavement.

He did not perceive, but Robert did. His heart leaped into his mouth, and a sudden thought entered his mind. He bent quickly down, and picked up the pocket-book. He raised his eyes to see if the movement was noticed. It was not. Mr. Grimes went on, unheeding his loss.

"This will buy bread for my wife and children," thought Robert, instantly.

A vision of the comfort which the money would bring that cheerless room lighted up his heart for an instant, but then—for he was not dishonest—there came another thought. The money was not his, much as he wanted it.

"But I cannot see my wife and children starve," he thought, again. "If it is wrong to keep the money, God will pardon the offence. He will understand my motive."

All this was sophistry, and he knew it. In a moment he felt it to be so. There were some things worse than starvation. It was his wife who said this just before he came out. Could he meet her gaze when he returned with food so obtained?

"I've lived honest so far," he thought; "I won't turn thief now."

It was with an effort he came to this decision, for all the while there was before his eyes that vision of a cheerless home, and he could hear Jimmy vainly asking for food. It was with an effort that he stepped forward and placed his hand on the gentleman's shoulder, and extended the hand that held the pocket-book.

"Thank you," said Mr. Grimes, turning round; "I hadn't perceived my loss. I am much obliged to you."

"You have reason to be," said Robert, in a low voice. "I was very near keeping it."

"That would have been dishonest," said Mr. Grimes, his tone altering slightly.

"Yes, it would; but it is hard for a man to be honest when he is penniless, and his wife and children without a crust."

"Surely you and your children are not in that condition?" said Mr. Grimes, earnestly.

"Yes," said Robert; "it is only too true. For two months I have vainly sought for work. I applied to you two days since."

"I remember you now. I thought I had seen you before. You still want work?"

"I should feel grateful for it."

"My foreman left me yesterday. Will you take his place for fifteen dollars a week?"

"Thankfully, sir."

"Then come to-morrow evening, or, rather, as to-morrow will be a holiday, the day succeeding. Meantime, take this for your present necessities."

He drew from his pocket some money, and put it into Robert's hand.

"It's ten dollars!" said Robert, in amazement.

"I know it. The pocket-book contains nearly two hundred dollars. But for you, I should have lost the whole. I wish you a merry Christmas."

"It will, indeed, be a merry Christmas," said Robert, with emotion. "Heaven bless you, sir! Good night."

"Good night."

Jane waited for her husband in the cold and cheerless room, which for a few days longer she might call her home.

An hour passed; there was a step on the stairs—her husband's. It could not be, for this was a cheerful, elastic step, coming up two stairs at a time. She looked eagerly to the door.

Yes, it was he. The door opened. Robert, radiant with joy, entered with a basket full of substantial provisions.

"Have you got some bread, father?" asked Jimmy, hopefully.

"Yes, Jimmy, some bread and meat, and here's a little tea and sugar. There's a few coals left, is there not Jane? Let's have a comfortable meal, for, please God, this shall be a merry Christmas."

"How did it happen? Pray tell me, Robert."

So Robert told his wife; and soon a bright fire lit up the before cheerless room, and there were four happy hearts that waited in joyful hope for the dawn of a "merry Christmas Day."

The next week they moved to better quarters. They have never since known what it was to want. Robert found a firm friend in Mr. Grimes, and has reason to remember, with a grateful heart, God's goodness on that Christmas Eve.

RECEIPTS
GENERAL AND DOMESTIC

FOR CHAPPED HANDS OR LIPS: Mix two spoonfulls of borax and half an ounce of glycerine with some water, and apply it to the chapped places twice a day.

CURE FOR EARACHE.—Put a little black pepper in some cotton, dip it in sweet oil and insert in the ear. This is one of the quickest remedies known.

SMOKY LAMPS.—To prevent the smoking of a lamp, soak the wick in strong vinegar, and dry it well before you use it. It will then burn bright and clear.

TO RENEW CRAPE, and make it look as good as new: Put a little water in a teakettle, and when the steam is issuing from the spout pass the crape frequently through the steam.

FOR PREMATURE GRAYNESS OF THE HAIR, arising from disease of the roots: To a quarter of a pound of rosewater add one drachm of sulphur and half a drachm of sugar of lead. Put in a bottle, and shake well before using. Apply it twice a day for two weeks.

OLD BLACK SILK DRESSES can be made to look like new by following these directions: First rub off all dust with a woolen rag. Then mix equal quantities of strong tea and vinegar, with which wash the silk by thoroughly rubbing with a flannel rag. Fold well; let it remain a while, and then iron on the wrong side with a hot iron.

TO CLEAN PAINT, smear it over with whitening mixed to the consistency of common paste in warm water. Rub the surface to be cleaned briskly, and wash off with pure cold water. Grease spots will in this way be almost instantly removed, as well as other filth, and the paint will retain its beauty and brilliancy unimpaired.

MILDEW may be removed by rubbing common yellow soap on the article; then a little salt on the soap, and a little starch on that. Rub all well together, and put it in the sunshine, or wet the linen, soap it, and apply salt and lemon-juice to both sides, or mix soft-soap with powdered starch, half as much salt and the juice of a lemon, and lay on with a brush. Let it lie on the grass day and night till the stain is gone.

WORTH KNOWING.—Every little while we read of one who has stuck a rusty nail in his foot or some other portion of his person, and lockjaw has resulted therefrom. All such wounds can be healed without any fatal consequences following them. The remedy is simple; it is only to smoke such wound, or any wound or bruise that is inflamed, with burning wool or woolen cloth. Twenty minutes in the smoke of wool will take pain out of the worst case of inflammation arising from a wound we ever saw.

NEWS OF INTEREST

COUPON tickets for weddings are the last.

ENGLAND sends us 4,000 barrels of malt liquors a month.

IT is said there are fifty-seven women editing newspapers in this country.

A NEW HAMPSHIRE tombstone bears this singular inscription: "Sacred to the memory of three twins."

AFTER 1st January, 1875, a New York law requires that every child shall be sent to school, or taught at home.

A SINGLE small engraving, a portrait of Aretino, by Maro Antonia Raimondi, sold in London for 786 guineas, or $4,095.

THE number of cabs now actually running in London is 7,864, of which 3,641 are Hansoms, and 4,223 are Clarence cabs.

THE British and Foreign Bible Society in London, since 1804, has issued 123,000,000 Bibles, in 180 different languages.

THE largest plate of glass ever manufactured in the United States was recently cast in Indiana. It measured 184 by 61 inches.

FOUR hundred different kinds of Berlin beer were exhibited recently at an international exhibition of beer and brewing interests held at Hygenian, Alsace.

THE Government of Madras Presidency, India, has an official tiger slayer, whose duty it is to superintend the measures for the extermination of those dangerous animals.

IN 1870 the passenger traffic on all the English railways was 281,000,000; in 1873 it reached 401,000,000, or an increase within three years of 112,000,000, or nearly 40 per cent.

AN Illinois girl drugged her father and mother the other evening, when she expected her lover, and it was forty-eight hours before the doctor could bring the old folks out of it.

THE diamonds belonging to the ex-Queen Isabella of Spain are valued at twelve million francs, and she wants to sell 'em. Persons who have not yet laid in their winter stock of diamonds should make a note of this.

WEDDING invitations are now issued on legal note sheet, the text being engraved in script, lengthwise. No initial crest or monograms are used either on the note sheet or envelope. Everything is plain and simple, bordering on economy.

MOUNT BLANC is no longer the monarch of the European mountains. Its height is only 15,784 feet, while that of Mount Elburz, on the northern or European side of the Caucasian water-shed, is 18,526 feet. The latter mountain, which has just been ascended by some members of the English Alpine Club, is said to resemble in shape a flattened dome, like an inverted teacup.

THE Fijians who have just joined their fortunes with Great Britain have another strange peculiarity besides feasting on human flesh. In Fiji, they say, taxpaying is associated with all that the people love. The call of the taxgatherer is a festive occasion, a day for the best attire, the pleasantest looks, and the kindest words. These interesting islanders hand in their money with singing and dancing, and the whole ceremony concludes with a dinner.

ASIATIC HANDSAWS.—Handsaws in America and England have the teeth pointed from the handle, while in Asiatic countries and in Greece they are made with teeth pointed the other way. The latter must be operated by pulling them, the former by pushing. In delicate work, and where very fine small saws are used, the Eastern saw is the best. The Orientals differ from us in setting the teeth of the saw also. They turn a group of a dozen one way, and the next group the other, while we alternate, one on one side, the next on the other.

THE ex-King of Oude, who receives a pension of $50,000 from the British Government, spends the entire sum in maintaining a mimic court in his little domain on the banks of the Hooghly. His devoted subjects number about 6,000. His court is perfect in form, his officers of state having the same titles and dignities as their predecessors had in Oude. His menagerie is the finest in the world, containing 20,000 birds, beasts, and snakes. He has four houses, where he alternately spends his days. The grounds are beautifully kept, employing 300 gardeners. The ex-king has two wives, and a family of 31 sons and 25 daughters.

THE Mayor of Atlanta, Georgia, was called upon to decide in a case requiring extreme nicety of touch and delicacy of discrimination. They had a Baby Show down in those parts, and the mayor, being *pro tem* the father of the city, was requested to sit in judgment upon twelve infants, male and female, after their kind. The mayor, being unable to stand the press, appointed a committee of four to decide and report. It was a trying moment. Twelve mothers dandled the twelve apostles (we should say cherubs) in their respective arms, each declaring that her chick was the dearest, sweetest, liveliest beauty in the world. The committee did a very sensible thing. They first procured four good, swift horses, which they tied to the outer gate, and having given their decision at the point of the bridle, made the best of their way to the nearest forest.

THE performance in the principal Japanese theatres begins at 6 A. M. and closes at 8 or 9 P. M. The dramas performed, usually founded on national legends, generally occupy all day, and are very minute and realistic. The house is square, lighted from above; the first floor is divided into small squares, or private boxes; next above come the public boxes, and above these an amphitheatre. The orchestra is located in a stage box, and the actors reach the stage by means of long planks placed on a level with the private boxes. The scenes are changed by a turn-table, which carries around with it all the actors before the audience, and brings into view, actors and all, the next scene. The table revolves as often as the scenes are to be changed—sometimes five or six times in half an hour. A man dressed all in black, with a cowl over his head, stands behind the actor, following all his motions, and not leaving him for an instant. He hands him all the properties he needs, and supplies him with a small stool to sit on when necessary. Another important service rendered by him is holding a lighted candle on the end of a long pole, under the actor's nose, so as to illuminate his gestures and grimaces.

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Poem—Love's Reason.
Correspondents' Bureau. Answers to all Inquirers.

WEEK AFTER NEXT!

In No. 23, will be commenced a charming Romance, entitled

Guilty or Not Guilty?

A Story of Christmas Eve.

1875—Postage, Terms, Etc.

Under the new Postal Law, which goes into operation on the first of January next, the amount of postage *must be prepaid weekly, by the publisher, at the post-office in this city.*

Many leading publications have been increased in price, and the clubbing rates of most of them materially changed for the coming year.

As the Post has probably a larger mail circulation than any other of the first-class literary weeklies, the new law will entail upon us a very heavy outlay, without any return whatever, as Postage to any part of the United States, hitherto paid by Subscribers, will, after the first of January, 1875, be paid by us without additional charge to Subscribers.

Since the Post passed into the hands of the present Editor and Proprietor, neither labor nor expense have been spared to make it the very best Literary and Family Paper published. New life and vigor have been infused into the old favorite; the best writers now contribute to its columns, and the reading matter, illustrations and typographical appearance are equal to the very best. The Post during the coming year will contain a larger fund of instruction, amusement and entertainment than can be procured, for the same terms, in any other paper published. It will be sent to any address, either singly or in clubs, on the following terms:

To Single Subscribers.—One copy, four months, $1.00; one copy, six months, $1.50; one copy, one year, $3.00.

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THE PRINCE OF WALES.

BY MAURICE EGAN.

After the death of the belligerent Llewellyn, the last really Welsh Prince of Wales, Edward I. played what, in popular parlance, would be called a "pretty sharp trick" on the chief subjects of the late ruler. The queen—England, by the way, daily expected an heir—was domiciled at the Castle of Caernarvon in Wales. Men wondered at this. Were there not enough pleasant castles in England? Would it not be more seemly for a British prince to be born on British soil? But the English king willed it otherwise, and on April 25, 1284, a young prince was born at Caernarvon. Edward was overjoyed; gold and lands were lavished on the messengers who brought the news. There was no telegraph then, or else they would not have been so fortunate. What man now-a-days thinks of rewarding the telegraph operator, even if the wires bring him tidings of the death of his mother-in-law?

Hearing that the queen was as well as could be expected, Edward sent for certain leaders of the Welsh people. They came. The king asked them whether they would submit to a prince born within the country, of blameless life and free from prejudices. The Welsh promised that they would willingly serve such a prince. Upon this the wily king presented his infant son to them, and made them swear allegiance to the young kingling, who certainly was of blameless life, although, like other babies, he probably had his prejudices—against intruding pins, rough beads, and being washed, for instance. But the Welshmen stuck to their promise, and the tiny Edward was hailed Prince of Wales. For this reason Pennant calls Caernarvon Castle the magnificent badge of his countrymen's subjection.

The father of the new prince was the first member of the Plantagenet family who had ever, while heir apparent to the throne, borne a title derived from any part of England. *His* father, Henry III., had, in 1245, made him Earl of Chester. Polydore Virgil asserts that he was also created Prince of Wales, but this is certainly incorrect, as that title was then borne by a native prince. There is no doubt that Edward of Caernarvon was the first Prince of Wales.

The origin of the crest and motto of the English Princes of Wales has been a matter of some perplexity to antiquarians. The crest and motto are three ostrich feathers and the humble *Ich dien* (I serve).

They, it is asserted, formed the war-blazon of the blind King of Bohemia, who died fighting against the Black Prince, Edward of Woodstock, by whom they were adopted. Prince Puckler Muskau, however, supposes that when Edward I. presented his little son to the Welsh chiefs, he exclaimed, in broken Welsh, "Eich dyn" ("This is your man"). The German traveler thinks that these words became corrupted into "Ich dien."

Edward of Caernarvon, the first Prince of Wales, was the first King of England who was deposed and murdered. He—Edward II.—was killed at the instigation of his infamous queen, Isabella, in Berkeley Castle, A. D. 1328.

The present Prince, Albert Edward, is the eighteenth Prince of Wales, of whose four immediate predecessors of the house of Hanover very little good is known. He was born at Buckingham Palace, November 9, 1841. His Royal Highness received the best education that England could give. He was placed in charge of two clergymen, a barrister-at-law and Mr. H. W. Fisher. Having studied for a session at Edinburgh, he entered Christ Church College, Oxford, where he attended the public lectures for a year, and afterwards resided several terms at Cambridge. If all this was not sufficient to teach his young ideas how to shoot, H. R. H. must have lacked ideas. In 1860 he visited the United States and Canada, where he was enthusiastically received. During that eventful summer Snobs reigned and Jenkins was rampant. "The prince, the prince, and nothing but the prince!" was the topic in which the souls of republican Americans delighted. Kinahin Cornwallis, the historian of the royal progress, tells of the prince's visit to Girard College, though somewhat oddly he mentions that girls, as well as boys, are educated in that institution, and informs breathless posterity that when the prince reached the roof his hat blew off, which proves conclusively that the wind is no respecter of persons.

In 1861, the prince joined the camp at the Curragh—he had been made a colonel in '58—and a year later, accompanied by Dean Stanley, he visited Jerusalem and the holy places of the East.

On March 10, 1863, he married the Princess Alexandra, of Denmark, who has since become the mother of five children, namely: Albert Edward Victor Christian, Duke of Cornwall, born January 8, 1864; George Frederick Ernest Albert, born June 3, 1865; Louise Victoria Alexandra Dagmar, born February 20, 1867; Victoria Alexandra Olga Mary, born in July, 1868, and Maud Charlotte Mary Victoria, born November 26, 1869. The only thing the prince has done to endear him to the hearts of the English people was his *coup d'etat* in '71, when he caught the typhoid fever. His sickness made him immensely popular, and the thanksgiving services held at St. Paul's Cathedral, on February 27, 1872, seemed a national outpouring of gratitude.

In 1863, as Duke of Cornwall, he took his seat in the House of Lords. Besides being Prince of Wales, he is a general in the army, colonel in the Tenth Hussars, Duke of Rothsay, Baron of Renfraw, Lord of the Isles, Earl of Dublin and Carrick, and he enjoys the patronage of twenty-nine livings.

STUDIES FROM MY WINDOW.

BY H. WATSON FLEMING.

No. 11.—SAVED.

It was a clear, frosty morning. My window-panes were decorated with those delicate and strange devices, which the imagination can so readily transform into the semblance of stately avenues and weird pictures of somewhat impossible scenery. The roadway had a bleached and whitened look. The houses opposite seemed to have retreated further into the distance, and they were bleached and whitened too. Every sound was terribly distinct.

Slowly the romantic etching on the glass faded into a damp cloud, which, in its turn, resolved itself into trickling tears, and found a lodgment on the window-frame inside. I was thinking that Jack Frost's fancies were not the only ones that end in sorrow and repining, when my attention was attracted by a noise outside.

Surely that was an alarm of fire, I thought.

Hurrying footsteps came nearer and nearer. The cry was caught by others, who joined the race, and made the frozen earth echo to the motion of their feet, and the air to vibrate with the wild shout:

"Fire! fire!"

A tiny jet or stream of slowly ascending smoke informed me of the locality of this new disaster. It was about a square off, in a block of three-storied buildings, each of which was tenanted by several families. The alarm was given, but the flames seemed to spread very rapidly, and the volume of smoke increased, still hanging about the spot, until its density was sufficient to hide more distant objects, and to render all near ones dim and indistinct.

Suddenly there was a great commotion. The engines passed like a flash, and turned the corner with a celerity that made one shudder. Little time was lost; the men were alive to the fearful import of their mission, and speedily attached their hose. Meantime other engines had arrived, and in a very short space the greater number were at work with that dull, precise and horribly dismal thud which sounds so provokingly regular and slow amid the haste and excitement of the scene.

The flames spread rapidly. All effort seemed vain and futile. The timbers blazed and crackled; the streams of water thrown upon them hissed like a greedy serpent, and made but slight impression on the flames. A portion of the building fell, with a hollow noise like the rumbling of a miniature volcano, while the myriad tongues of fire leaped greedily into the vacuum thus made, and danced eagerly toward the dense cloud of smoke and steam which hovered round the place.

Little piles of salvage were scattered about the street, and their owners, wringing their hands disconsolately, were still watching the progress of the flames with an interest bordering on fascination. Some were bewailing their unhappy fate, others congratulating themselves that this calamity had not happened in the dead of the night when all were asleep, and some might have perished before assistance came, while others, in their haste, might have left behind all the little they possessed, as, indeed, one poor woman had done, and she was inconsolable.

Suddenly a cry of horror rent the air. A figure had appeared at a window of the third story, which hitherto the flames had left untouched—a figure dressed in white, with golden tresses, which the treacherous element seemed to kiss. It was but for an instant that she stood there, in piteous entreaty; then fell back, doubtless overpowered by the intensity of heat and smoke.

"A woman!" exclaimed the firemen, awed by the unexpected sight, and rearing, instantly, their ladders against the trembling walls. "A woman in there yet?"

"'Tis Rettie," said a bystander. "Good God, did no one think of her?"

Rettie was an invalid. Her brother was at sea. During his absence she lived very much alone; sometimes (when her health permitted her) doing a little sewing for her neighbors; at others, and much more frequently, living upon the pittance her brother gave, obtruding her sorrows upon none, seeking the sympathy or assistance of no one either.

She was very young, barely sixteen, I think—petite, fair, and somewhat sorrowful. The loneliness of her life, perhaps, added that cynical curl to her lip, as she answered "yes" or "no" (she rarely said more than this) to some simple question; or was it the pride of birth and vexation of poverty, that raised that fair head so loftily above her station?

Some doubted the evidence of their senses. Surely some one should have thought of Rettie? The truth is, her absence was not missed until her appearance at the window conveyed the awful truth. She was asleep while the house was burning. No one had warned or rescued her; and now, partly stifled (her living was a miracle), she had staggered to the casement to fall senseless beneath it, and none could help or rescue her.

Several times the gallant men essayed the task, and each time were driven back by the intense heat. One man even reached the window and dashed it open, but he, too, had to return, his mission unfulfilled. The women screamed, and thanked God that such an awful fate was spared them. The men paled, and would each have taken some risk upon himself if any means of succor had presented itself to their distracted minds.

Suddenly a youth, pale, breathless, eager, dashed into the croud. He was a mere boy, a delicate, curly-headed thing, with noble features, and an eagle eye. Just such a boy as would remind one of what our heroes were, firm, unflinching—stubborn, if you will.

For a moment he hesitated, then rushed to the ladder which the firemen had quitted that moment in dismay.

"Is she—there?" he asked, pointing to the crumbling wall above him. The men said the roof was giving way.

"Nay, Tom, you can do nothing. It is too late," said one.

"Too late, and she is suffering untold tortures there?" he answered. "Surely that is the expression of a coward!"

The dauntless youth ascended the ladder, which trembled at every step. The cruel flames leaped out as if to welcome him to their embrace, but he persevered. Half blinded by the smoke and heat he continued the advance, to the amazement and surprise of those who had gone before and knew the peril which surrounded him.

Still on he struggled, and without a moment's delay he fought his way into the room they had indicated. The crowd murmured in appreciation of his bravery, but doubtfully as to its result; and it did seem that he had sacrificed himself, so long was it before he reappeared. The firemen, determined to assist him, hastily equipped themselves for a new attempt; but a new calamity happened just then. The roof fell in with a noise like the discharge of many guns, yet at the instant, the form of the youth was seen leaning upon the edge of the ladder. In his arms was the senseless Rettie, her face blackened and her golden tresses burned. Cautiously the men advanced, and rescued the two from their perilous position.

Upon reaching the earth, he fainted, and, alas! it was noted then how badly he was burned. Rettie, by some mysterious dispensation of Providence, was scarcely injured, beyond the severe shock which her system had received.

"Is she saved?" the brave youth questioned, upon recovering consciousness.

A dozen pair of admiring eyes were upon him, and a dozen willing tongues whispered softly, "Yes."

They bore him home upon a litter, for he could no longer walk, and the girl he had rescued became his attendant for days afterwards. She never left his side, save in his service, but when their eyes met she blushed, and he would say, "I am glad that it was I who saved you, Rettie," as if the thought was his reward; then she would weep a little, and ask if he felt better. It was a question that pleased him to answer "Yes;" but she knew, for they had told her, that he would never regain his strength.

He was dying for her sake. He thought so toward the last, and gloried in the thought with a fierce pleasure.

"I loved you, Rettie," he said; "and when they told me that you were burned in the flames, nothing could keep me from you. You were mine then; all mine.

"I had loved you for a long time, Rettie, dear: but you never knew it, for you were so proud and distant, and I was so unworthy. I thought sometime, perhaps, I might accomplish something which would bring us nearer to each other, and that then I might tell you how I worshipped you. I can tell you now, and you will love me a little, won't you, when I—when I am gone?"

"Oh, Tom, I do love you!" said Rettie, crying.

"Then we shall meet in Heaven," said the dying lad. He laid his head upon her shoulder, and seemed to be sleeping quietly, but it was the end. He who had dared so much for her sake, never heard the praise which true men and brave heaped upon his name; and she—she had a strange feeling of regretfulness. Her dead hero was everything to her, and she wished that they might both have perished, or that he had left her to her doom.

Rettie is older now, and changed, much changed. No longer does she wear that look of haughty pride, but her face is suffused with sorrowful expression. Whenever the name of her rescuer is mentioned, her cheeks glow, and her eyes sparkle as she lifts them to the skies; and once a year she decorates his grave with flowers and wets them with her tears.

THE HISTORY OF A LIFE.

BY R. W. PROCTER.

Day dawned: Within a curtained room,
Filled to faintness with perfume,
A lady lay at point of doom.

Day closed: A child had seen the light;
But for the lady, fair and bright,
She rested in undreaming night.

Spring rose: The lady's grave was green:
And near it oftentimes was seen
A gentle boy, with thoughtful mien.

Years fled: He wore a manly face,
And struggled in the world's rough race,
And won, at last, a lofty place.

And then—he died: Behold, before ye,
Humanity's poor sum and story:
Life—Death—and all that is of Glory.

A LITTLE RUSE.

BY HESTER A. BENEDICT.

It was ten o'clock.

Mrs. Richard Forsyth had just finished her breakfast of toast and tea, and, in elegant *negligé*, was reclining in her invalid's chair, stroking a gray and black tabby with one jeweled hand, and with the other rustling the leaves of Ouida's last, in a listless, absent way, when, *sans ceremonie et sans reproche*, her friend, Lottie Weatherel, bustled into the room, shaking the cool, pure breath of the outer world from every fold of her dress, and looking the embodiment of health, and hope, and happiness.

"Good morning, dear," she said, with a little vicious glance at tabby, "I hope you're in a gracious mood, for I've come to ask a favor."

"A favor?" sighed the invalid. "You know it is granted already. What is it?"

"I want you to walk with me to the park, and really enjoy an hour of this perfect day."

Mrs. Forsyth's hands went up in holy horror, and before she had got back the breath surprise had taken, Lottie had finished her sentence, and was choosing a stout suit from the boudoir wardrobe, with the freedom of an old friend, and the persistency of one whose mind was fully made up.

"Why, Lottie, you are crazy?" Mrs. Forsyth exclaimed. "I haven't walked so far in a year."

"All the greater reason why you should begin now. I tell you what it is, Lou, there's no cosmetic like fresh air, and its accompanying healthful state of spirits. You sit here day after day, nursing your ailments of body and mind, and growing sallow, and wrinkled, and faded, when you might keep yourself young and pretty, if you only would. The fact is, you are perishing for lack of employment, just like hundreds of fashionable women, and you'd feel better, look better, and *be* better, if you had some good work to do—some work that you could just put your heart in, and let it grow strong as well as tender."

Mrs. Forsyth sighed. She was used to her friend's "preaching," as she termed Lottie's plain, unvarnished statement of facts, and she really loved her too well to take offence. But Lottie Weatherel had never seemed so terribly in earnest before, and the half broken-down woman beside her was too indolent for argument, or even opposition."

"Maybe you are right," she said, wearily. "I don't amount to a great deal, I know, and sometimes I think the world would be better off without me. But I've no ambition, Lottie. I take so little interest in anything—scarcely any at all—and yet nine-tenths of the women in the world would be proud of a place and a name like mine."

"If you had half a dozen children to keep you low and wise," Lottie said, abruptly, "or even a *child* that you *loved*, it would be so different—your life, I mean, dear Lou; so much broader and better, so much richer and sweeter."

Mrs. Forsyth was silent, but a hungry, pleading look flashed into her blue eyes, and across her faded face. The mother-love was strong within her, but the crown of motherhood had not been fashioned for her it seemed, and though she loved her husband in a weak, selfish way, as weak women usually do, her life seemed barren and useless, and she *had* been tempted to fling it from her, and be forever at rest.

Poor Mrs. Forsyth!

* * * * *

Stuyvesant Park had never been more quietly sweet than on that soft November day. The wind with gentle hand tossed the light leaves hither and thither through the sunshine that seemed to have dropped out of June, so warm and bright it was, and the twitter of sparrows, the voices of children—even the hand-organ grinding away beside the old Quaker church that for years had seemed dispensing "peace and good will" to the lives around, filled the air with melody, and made one forget that the city was so near.

Very distinctive beings in appearance were the two ladies who sat on one of the low benches to the southward, watching the play of the fountain, and the play of the children on every hand. The face of one was like the day that blessed the world—bright, peaceful, and full of strength; that of the other, old before its time, faded and furrowed by discontent and by fancied rather than by real illness, and all the winning tenderness of its early time buried under, if not forever obliterated by, a cold and cruel selfishness.

"Your walk hasn't hurt you, has it, Lou?" Miss Weatherel asked.

"Perhaps not," admitted the matron; "but I'll be worse for it to-morrow, I am sure."

"No, you won't; you'll feel a year younger, and look it, too," persisted the girl. "Come here, baby," turning, and holding out her hand to a four-year old at play with the leaves and the sands a yard or so away.

The child looked up, tossing its short flaxen curls back, deliberated a moment, or seemed to, then tripped gaily toward the outreached hand, laughing, and saying:

"I know oo! I know oo!"

Just the least little flush leaped into Miss Weatherel's face, as she lifted the child to her lap, but she looked away from Mrs. Forsyth, silent for a moment. Then, "You're a dear little thing," she said. "Did ever you see such eyes, Lou?"

"Yes," Lou answered; "but it was long ago."

Her voice was low, and soft, and sad. One would almost have said a sound of regret throbbed through it, like the sound of unhappy waves through the talk of all the winds.

"What is your name, little one?" she asked, after a silence that was voiceful.

"My name? Why, mamma calls me Sunshine," lisped the child.

"And what is mamma's name?"

"Mamma."

"Yes; but what else?"

"Dus' *mamma!*" emphasized the baby, shaking her wee head, and picking at the trimming of her sacque. The sacque was a very plain, cheap one—so was the dress; but both were becomingly made, and told their own story of loving but laboring hands.

"Dere's my mamma," the child continued, pointing to a little figure in black under one of the willows; "an' she's dus' e *doodest* mamma ever was—only——"

"Only what?"

"Only, since papa went away with Dod, she kies, an' kies, an' kies!"

"And what do *you* do, then?" asked Mrs. Forsyth.

"O, I tisses her like ever'sing!" and a ringing laugh went fluttering across the lawn to the woman under the willow. She lifted her face for a moment, then bent it lower over her sewing. The child was in good hands, and the child was happy! For her?—well, time would tell.

"Sunshine" had clambered over to Mrs. Forsyth's lap, and that lady's face had taken on a new look. All its weariness had vanished, and in its stead was a sweet, yearning tenderness,, a timid outlook of a great, great love that only waited a chance to live its life divinely, and fondly her fingers threaded the soft, light curls, while in her heart a thought of what she might have been had heaven blest *her* with such a gift kept quickening her pulses, flushing her pale cheek, and brightening her eyes, till she seemed almost young again.

"It's very strange, Lottie," she said, speaking as one in dreams, "but I feel strongly drawn to this little waif. Something in me seems to claim her. It is as if I had known and loved her long ago; always, even."

The tears were in Miss Weatherel's eyes, and she turned her head to hide them.

"Don't you suppose I could have her, Lottie?" Mrs. Forsyth went on, after a little. "Poor people don't care much for their children, as a general thing, I presume, and I want this baby," speaking in a quick, half-petulant way, as if her wants were paramount, and must be met in some way.

"On the contrary," spoke up the girl, "poor people, in my opinion, are devoted to their offspring. Of course you can't have the child. The very idea is preposterous."

Mrs. Forsyth sighed heavily.

"You would'nt mind kissing me, Sunshine?" she said.

"Yes—four tisses?" queried the child.

"Yes, a dozen! And—let me see. What shall I give you?"

"Dive me that 'ittle boo stone," touching the tiny diamond which another "sunshine" was touching, too, among the laces at the throat of Mrs. Forsyth.

"It is yours," handing her the pin. "Now for the kisses!" which were given fully a dozen, and the child grew eager to be off with its treasure.

The "stone" had meant nothing to Mrs. Forsyth—such baubles were too common with her to be of value—it was but a stone to the child, but it might mean life, aye, honor, which is more than life, to the woman under the willow!

Miss Weatherel saw the diamond safely deposited in the mother's hands, staying beside her just long enough to say, "Everything goes charmingly. Don't fail me to-morrow." Then she went back to her companion, and the two ladies sauntered slowly to the home of Mrs. Forsyth.

"Why, Lou, my darling," Mr. Forsyth said that evening, "what has happened? I have'nt seen you look so like the girl I married in a long time." And he bent and kissed her,

"With his heart on his lips."

and a hopeful smile that seemed, and was, a stranger.

Oh, if women were but wiser, there would be fewer broken vows, fewer mockeries of home!

The next day—it was Mrs. Forsyth's suggestion, and Lottie had given a seemingly indifferent assent—the two friends were in the park again, and there, too, was the child and the woman under the willow.

"I'm going over to see her," Mrs. Forsyth said, that little pronoun meaning the mother. "Maybe she'll give me the child. I've taken such a fancy to it, Lottie. Don't laugh at me. Last night I could scarcely sleep at all for thinking of it, and when I did it was only to dream that it was my very own. I *must* go, Lottie."

And a moment later she had laid one jeweled hand on the head so lowly bowed that its face could not be seen. "Sunshine" was saying, "See, mamma, see! the lady 'at div' me a 'ittle boo 'tone!" And Lottie Wetherel, with fast-beating heart, stood waiting the *denouement* she knew must follow.

Presently the face lifted, and——

"Margaret! oh, my God!" cried Mrs. Forsyth.

But the surprise and the shock had been too great, and she sank to the ground in a real faint, while hovering over her the young mother moaned:

"Oh, Lottie, Lottie, we have killed her!" and the child cried, too.

Miss Weatherel never once let go her good common sense. She took off her hat, filled it water at the basin, and in an instant was bathing the white face and the blue-veined wrists. Another instant, and the shut eyes opened; still another, and the white, shut lips.

"Margaret," was said, softly; "*Sister* Margaret!"

And a voice as soft made answer:

"Can you forgive me, dear, *dear* Lou?"

Is it needful that I tell the sad, old story of one forsaking home and friends, and facing hardships never dreamed of, for love of one who had but love to give, the subsequent disowning by proud parents, and on, and on, and on to the time of the sisters' reunion? The reader knows it all, or all that can be known apart from the living of it, and I pass to a happier theme.

For two years the elegant house of Richard Forsyth was the happy home of Margaret Lee, and Sunshine was its music. The child, with its mother's eyes, during all that time, was Mrs. Forsyth's constant companion and idol. It's little life had grown into her own, making it stronger, and broader, and better, and giving to it impulses, acting under which she had found health of body, heart and soul. The old bloom was back upon her cheeks, the old laughter on her lips, and, better than all, but because of all—*she held the heart of her husband.*

For two years! Then, Mrs. Lee laid aside her mourning, took a new name and a new home—a home whose master was worthy to be her own; and her life had found, though late, its crowning and its refuge.

"I should be inconsolable now," Mrs. Forsyth said to Lottie Wetherel the evening after the marriage, "wholly inconsolable, were it not for—for," dropping her eyes and blushing like a bride, "for the 'ship' so nearly in. Oh, Lottie, I am so happy!"

"And I am happy, too," Lottie answered, looking up from her sewing—a dainty trifle to be used at the coming of the "ship." "I don't believe a single soul, unless it be yours or Dick's, is happier, because of it, than mine is. But I honestly think, dear, you'd have been in your grave now, if I had not got you out of doors that day we both remember."

"Or in the lunatic asylum," added Mrs. Forsyth, never once asking who, or what the pronoun "it" could mean. Then after a long, thoughtful silence. "You, and God, have been very good to me," she said; "better, far better than I deserved. My life—and the child's—must thank you."

PAPERS FOR THE PEOPLE.

BREAD—STALE AND FRESH.

I don't like stale bread—do you? My reason for disliking it is very much the reason why I don't like Dr. Fell; your reason is really the same, but you probably cheat yourself into the belief that it is something else—namely: because the bread is "so dry." Allow me to undeceive you. *No* bread is dry; bread just baked is nearly *half water;* and the stalest of stale loaves has not lost more than a hundredth part of this water.

The fact that bread contains nearly half its weight of water is surprising, but not so surprising as that your own body contains a considerably larger proportion—nearly three fourths. The flour from which bread is made is dry enough, containing not more than sixteen per cent. of water; but it has a great tendency to absorb water, and in the process of baking it absorbs it rapidly. The gum which is produced from the starch of the flour in baking, holds this water firmly, and the gluten, which forms a coating round every little hollow in the bread, resists evaporation, and thus bread becomes moist, and keeps moist let it be ever so stale.

But if stale bread be not dry bread, what is it? What makes that familiar difference between the soft, spongy crumb of yesterday's baking, and the harsh, crumbling morsel of six days old? There is no difference of moisture; every cook or baker will tell us there is no use of placing bread in a moist cellar to keep it fresh or prevent evaporation of its water, since it will assuredly become stale as the hours roll on.

On the other hand, every baker and every cook will also tell us, that if a stale loaf be placed in the oven again for a few minutes, it will come out having, for a time at least, all the characters of fresh bread.

Who does not know the effect of toasting a slice of stale bread? The fire scorches the outside layers and renders them completely dry; but, if the slice be not too thin, we find the interior layers deliciously soft and palatable. It is the water in the bread which prevents the loaf becoming all crust. In an oven with a temperature of 500 degrees, the loaf gets baked or browned outside, and the crust is formed; but the inside never has a temperature above 100 degrees.

If the inside is thus slow to heat, it is also slow to cool. Everyone knows how long the crumb of a roll continues warm, and the loaf taken from the oven at one, even on a cold winter morning, come warm to the breakfast-table at seven.

Does it not seem that the difference between fresh bread and stale bread is only the difference between *hot* bread and *cold* bread; especially when we reflect that we have only to warm the stale bread to make it fresh again. But there is this fact which stands in the way of such an explanation: the bread which has been rebaked, although hardly undistinguishable from bread which has been recently baked, is only so for a very short time—it rapidly becomes stale again. Were this not the case we need never have to complain of stale bread.

The conclusion drawn from experiments is, that the staleness depends on a peculiar condition of the bread, and this condition is itself dependent on a fall of temperature.

Dr. Lockridge.

The First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry celebrated its Centennial Anniversary on the 17th of November. This veteran organization was the body-guard of Washington, and is memorable for its service in the Revolutionary War. It possesses more than a national reputation, and the history connected with the troop is one to which every patriotic resident of the Quaker City can refer with pride and satisfaction. The troop was first constituted and equipped, at private expense, on the 17th of November, 1774, and their services were accepted by the Continental Congress. They did valuable service in the Revolution, and were complimented in a most gracious manner upon their discharge from actual service by General Washington on January 23, 1 77. The flag it carried at Princeton is now in its possession. The troop did valuable service in the war of 1812. It assisted at the reception of Lafayette in 1824, escorting him in triumph from Trenton to Philadelphia, and reflected great credit upon itself as an organization and upon the country in public services rendered since then on numerous occasions when the offices of a brave and well-disciplined militia organization were needed.

Home is not a name, nor a form, nor a routine. It is a spirit, a presence, a principle. Material and method will not, and cannot make it. It must get its light and sweetness from those who inhabit it, from flowers and sunshine; from the sympathetic natures which, in their exercise of sympathy, can lay aside the tyranny of the broom, and the awful duty of endless scrubbing.

Out of one hundred men you run against, you will find ninety-five worrying themselves into low spirits and indigestion about troubles that will never come.

The true secret of living at peace with all the world is to have an humble opinion of ourselves.

We learn to climb by keeping our eyes not on the hills that lie behind, but on the mountains that rise before us.

LITTLE BY LITTLE.

BY IDA FAY.

There was a poor woman who lived alone with her two daughters. They were honest and industrious, but they lived far away from their friends; and when a hard year came they were so pinched that they could hardly live at all. Finally the mother fell sick, and the daughters decided that they must go out and find work. So the eldest took her spinning-wheel and set out, saying to herself, "We want wood and coals, and a winter stock of everything. I must get a great deal of work; a month's spinning, for the very least, to begin with."

So when people said to her, "How much do you ask a day for spinning?" she answered, "I do not intend to work by the day, but by the month," and walked on. And as it happened that no one was willing to engage her for a month, after traveling about a week she came home, with her shoes worn in holes and her money all spent, and sitting down in the corner began to sigh and cry, saying, "Oh, what a sad world this is."

But the youngest answered, "The world is made up of small lots, sister, and we don't need all those things at once, you know. Do you stay at home and take care of our mother, and I will go with my wheel and see what I can find."

"Very well," said the eldest, "go; but see, now, it will be as I tell you. You will find nothing."

The younger sister started off, however, for all that, and came to an old house.

"Stay, and do an hour's work," squeaked an old woman, putting her head out at the door.

"A little is better than nothing," thought the girl; and going in, she spun an hour for the old woman, and went home.

"You are soon back," said the elder sister; "what did you find?"

"An hour's spinning," answered her sister.

"A great matter, I should think; and what did you get for it?"

"The old woman promised to pay me another time."

Then the elder sister laughed louder than ever, but the younger one hardly looked toward her. She was wondering what made her spinning-wheel, standing by itself in the corner, go round and round, hum, buzz, hum, as if some one was working on it.

The next day she went out as before, but this time found no spinning, only an old man who wanted his stockings darned.

"Well, better that than nothing," thought the girl; and going in, she darned his stockings for him.

In the evening, "What have you been doing to-day?" asked the elder sister.

"Darning stockings."

"Why, this is better and better, we shall all be rich soon, at this rate. What did you get?"

"The old man promised to pay me another time."

The elder sister began to scold and cry; but the younger hardly heard her, for wondering what made such a stir in her sewing-basket.

A third time she went out. A lame old woman asked her to cut some wood.

"Better that than nothing," she said again, and cut the wood.

In the evening her sister was still more angry than before, declaring that winter was coming, and they should all starve to death.

Before the younger one could answer, however, came a knock at the door; and opening, there was a fat little old man in a green coat and cap.

The instant that the door was open, he ran in and laid a great bundle on the floor, whiffed off to the door again, and brought in another bundle, rushed out and brought in another, till the floor was covered with blankets, shawls, cloaks, comforters, curtains, carpets, tablecloths, and everything that they wanted.

"These are all yours," he said to the younger sister; "you spun an hour for the Fairy Queen, and so the fairies have been spinning for you." And turning a somersault, away he went up the chimney.

"Mighty well," said the elder sister; "but we can't eat shawls and blankets."

Just then came another knock, and there was the little old man again.

"You darned stockings for the Wood Goblin," said he, "and he sends them to you to remember him by." And tossing a pile of stockings in the middle of the floor, he whisked off in the dark.

The elder sister began to laugh scornfully.

"Here is a splendid night's work! How valuable those old darned stockings will be!"

But just then came another knock.

"Here is the wood you cut for the Brook Goblin," said the little man again. And looking out, they saw faggots on faggots of wood piled up, enough to last them for three years.

"Very fine; but we can't eat wood," said the elder sister.

But just then the younger uttered a loud scream, for turning over the stockings, she found that they were stuffed from toe to top with broad gold pieces; so they were best of all.

WANTING FRIENDS.—"I wish that I had some good friends to help me on in life," cried idle Dennis, with a yawn.

"Good friends! Why, you have ten!" replied his master.

"I'm sure I haven't half so many, and those I have are too poor to help me."

"Count your fingers, my boy," said his master.

Dennis looked at his large, strong hands.

"Count thumbs and all," added the master.

"I have; there are ten," said the lad.

"Then never say that you have not got ten good friends, able to help you on in life. Try what these true friends can do before you begin grumbling and fretting because you do not get help from others."

THE modest deportment of those who are truly wise, when contrasted with the assuming air of the young and ignorant, may be compared to the different appearances of wheat, which, while its ear is empty, holds up its head proudly, but as soon as it is filled with grain, bends modestly down, and withdraws from observation.

"FOUND."

BY FREDERICK S. MILLS.

It was a pocket-book, well lined with greenbacks, crisp and new. Her foot touched it, and she had almost passed it, before its discovery was made. Then she gathered it up, and examined it with all a child's exultant curiosity.

Five new ten-dollar bills! and no one to claim them from her! How rich she was! and her dear, poor ailing mother, how it would do her heart good to witness them!

"But they are not my very own, to keep," she thought.

What a swift change passed over her joyous face just then!

Many years ago—that is, many years to Ada, who owned only to twelve summers altogether (it was one of those little mysteries of which her memory was slight, as it happened in her extreme youth)—she had herself been found, just as this pocket-book was found by her, upon the sidepath, lost or cast astray.

Good, kind-hearted Mistress Carey had given the foundling a home, and now that her adopted mother was poor and ailing, it was *very hard* that Ada's "find" should not belong to her really—just as she herself belonged to her rescuer and protector!

Ada had not been taught that "honesty was the best policy;" if she had, she would have doubted the teaching now. But she had learned that honesty was *right*, and that retaining in her own possession that which did not belong to her, was a *sin*. So she never doubted, after the first thought, that the pocket-book and its contents must be restored.

Of course, she took it home with her, holding it tightly in her hand, lest any portion of her new trust should escape her keeping, and she handed it to dear Mother Carey, with so much importance, it might have seemed that all of the currency of the United States treasury was deposited in her custody.

"Why, Ada," she said, "this is indeed strange. Here is your own name inscribed upon the book!"

The name, "Ada," was written in a masculine hand. The book was a gift, probably—maybe from husband to wife, or, perhaps, from a lover to his beloved.

From the contents, it was discovered that the book belonged to a Mrs. Browning, who resided in a fashionable street some half dozen squares away.

The first care must be its restoration, and, as the child had found the treasure, to her its restoration was deputed.

She was ushered into a stately room, whose elegant decoration made her own very neat attire seem strangely out of place. Her foot sank into a soft carpet, and she dared not seat herself upon those handsome chairs, although invited so to do.

In the midst of her wonderment and delight—"this must be fairyland," she thought, "the beautiful home of which I sometimes dream"—Mrs. Browning entered.

"So you have found something you think I have lost, my dear child?" she tenderly said, "and you are right, my dear—the pocket-book is mine."

There was a tinge of sadness in her tone, and Ada wondered why she wasn't glad to have so much money back again.

"But this is not my only loss, dear. There is something you cannot restore to me, but of which you remind me strangely."

"Indeed, that was all," said Ida. "Indeed, I did not take a single cent."

"You are a good girl," said the lady, smiling. "What is your name?"

"My name is Ada," said the young girl, bashfully.

"Ada! How strange! And the resemblance, too! And your mother's name?" asked Mrs. Browning, taking her by the hand.

"My mother is Mrs. Carey," said Ada, proudly. "She is not my real mother, you know, but she has taken care of me for ever so many years, and loves me just as if she was my real mamma."

Mrs. Browning smiled.

"Then your mother is dead?" she said.

"Is she, ma'am? I don't know," said Ada, very quietly.

"If it should be my lost one," mused the lady, sadly; "but that is impossible, I fear."

There is nothing impossible. The most improbable circumstance which the mind can fathom may occur sometimes in the tangled threads of life.

"You are very much like what I have imagined of a little girl who was lost in her infancy, Ada, and she bore your name, being named after myself. My name is Ada, too."

"Yes, ma'am. I supposed so, from the writing in the book."

"My husband is dead, and my child is lost to me. I am alone in the world, my dear."

Ada thought how dreadful that must be.

"Would you like to take the place of the lost one, child, and come here to live with me?"

For a moment Ada thought she would, but, then, she thought that poor, dear Mother Carey would be very lonely, too.

"Will you take me to see her, Ada?"

Ada thought how strange it would seem for this great lady to visit their humble home; but the lady insisted, and she went.

There were explanations then on both sides, which the child could barely understand. Little baby dresses were examined closely, and the two women wept bitterly.

"You are, indeed, my daughter," said Mrs. Browning, smoothing her hair with her soft hand, tenderly, "and I am proud to find that you are honest and good, my dear."

"But dear Mother Carey!" said Ada, lovingly. "You will not let them take me away from you, will you? I could not bear to leave you—you who are so kind and good."

Nor did she. Mrs. Carey and her charge removed to the house of Ada's newly-found mamma; and the story was speedily spread abroad how, from a child's honesty, her inheritance was "found."

LITTLE SINS.—In a Carolina forest of a thousand acres you can scarcely find a tree that is not dead and crumbling to decay. No fire has swept over it, no lightning scathed those naked, bleaching pines. This ruin was wrought by a little insect's larvæ, no larger than a grain of rice. What a hundred axe-men could not accomplish by years of hard labor, this seemingly insignificant insect sent its feeble offspring to perform. One alone could have little power, it is true, but millions were marshaled, and all the skill of man could not stay their course. Such is the power of little sins.

WHEN SANTA CLAUS COMES.

BY A. R. B.

A good time is coming; I wish it were here!—
The very best time in the whole of the year:
I'm counting each day, on my fingers and thumbs,
The weeks that must pass before Santa Claus comes.

Good-by for a while, then, to lessons and school;
We can laugh, talk, and sing, without "breaking the rule;"
No troublesome spelling, nor writing, nor sums;
There's nothing but play-time when Santa Claus comes.

I'll hang up my stocking to hold what he brings;
I hope he will fill it with lots of nice things;
He must know how dearly I love sugar-plums;
I'd like a big box full when Santa Claus comes.

And now that the snow-flakes begin to come down,
And the wind whistles sharp, and the branches are brown,
I don't mind the cold, though my fingers it numbs;
For it brings the time nearer when Santa Claus comes.

PLIGHTED IN PERIL!

OR,

The Lone Star of Texas.

BY CHARLES MORRIS, ESQ.,

AUTHOR OF "THE HEIR OF GLENDALE," "JOHN PASSMORE'S PLOT," ETC.

[This serial was commenced in No. 17, Vol. 54. Back numbers can be obtained from all newsdealers throughout the United States, or direct from this office.]

CHAPTER XI.—(CONTINUED.)

From the central wigwam now came a tall, dignified, oldish man, his skin several shades lighter than that of his companions, but the high cheek bones, straight hair and stoical look forming true Indian signs.

Yet there was that about him that betokened an affinity to the whites, something of the shrewd, canny Scotchman in his face.

He had indeed Scotch blood in his veins, for it was the half-breed, Colonel Bowles, the head chief of the Cherokee nation.

He came forward and spoke in a mild, yet dignified tone to the wounded chief, his eyes fixed with much interest on the female captives.

The short colloquy was conducted in the Cherokee tongue, and at its close the chief passed on to the wigwam, whence Colonel Bowles had emerged, apparently to take the rest which he so much needed.

The half-breed walked forward and accosted the prisoners, addressing his remarks to Captain Wilson, though his eyes wandered with interested glances toward the females.

"You wear the uniform of the United States army," he said, in correct and well-pronounced English. "What brings you so far into Texas?"

"More pleasure than business, Colonel Bowles," replied the captain. "You are a man in authority, and I wish to know of you why I have been taken and why I am held a prisoner. You are not at war with the United States."

"You were found in bad company, captain," replied the Indian, recognizing the rank of his prisoner from his uniform.

"Are these bad company?" asked the captain, "these innocent women?"

"There were two Texans with you," replied Colonel Bowles, in a harsh tone. "Two of our warriors are dead. Three are wounded. Is this the act of a friend?"

"We were attacked without a question of whether we were friends or foes," said the captain; "nor can you hold me and these weak women responsible for the acts of two scouts, who have escaped."

Some words, in a low tone, were spoken by one of the Indians, the colonel listening.

"You killed a warrior yourself," said the chief when these words were ended. "Was this peace? Shall we let you free, and let a Cherokee brave go to his grave unrevenged?"

"I acted in self-defence," boldly replied the captain. "When men are attacked with knife and tomahawk it is no time to talk of peace."

"You should not now talk of peace, then," harshly replied the other. "You were taken weapon in hand. The canoes have now gone back to the island for the dead and wounded. You shall stand beside the brave, with his hand stilled, his tongue hushed in death, and then tell me if the Cherokee owes you nothing. We revenge our dead."

"Colonel Bowles is no fool. He will not stir up war with the United States."

"The Great Father at Washington has no eyes for his stray sheep," replied the cunning Indian. "The captain is not my prisoner. He belongs to the chief in yonder wigwam. Why not ask him for liberty?"

Colonel Bowles walked away, as if to end this conversation. Miss Amberly, who had stood listening to this colloquy with close attention, now accosted him.

"Does the Cherokee war upon women as well as upon men?" she asked.

"When the white soldiers enter the lodges of the Cherokees, are our squaws and our maidens safe?" was the reply.

"I have heard Colonel Bowles spoken of as a brave and generous man," she answered. "I am a weak girl. I am seeking to save my father from prison, perhaps from death. The chief is a father; he will not hinder me."

"All Colonel Bowles' sons and daughters are in the grave," said the chief, sadly. "He has no heart."

"He must know a father's feelings. He will not keep a daughter from her father in distress."

"Major Amberly is our foe," said the chief, showing that he had learned who she was. "We will let him stay in prison. We will keep his daughter as a hostage."

A look of deep distress came upon her face as the last hope of release seemed to fall from her. It was followed by an expression of indignation.

"I have been told better things of the great chief of the Cherokees," she exclaimed; "I did not dream that he was heartless and cruel. He is only half Indian. I will appeal to Lone Star. I hoped to find some pity in your white blood. I will appeal to the full Indian."

A look of anger crossed the chief's face at the insult conveyed in her words. It was accompanied by a surprised expression.

"Lone Star!" he repeated. "He will not release you. He has already refused."

"I do not understand the chief," she replied. "When did he refuse?"

"On the island, where you were his prisoner and his doctor."

"That wounded chief?" she asked, with an accent of astonishment.

"Yes," he answered, "he is the full-blooded Indian. He is your captor. He is Lone Star. Ask him again to set you free."

Colonel Bowles walked away, leaving the captives to themselves. They looked at each other in surprise. The wounded giant then was the celebrated war chief of the Cherokees? Their last hope of release, by interceding with the leaders of the tribe, was gone. Dejection took the place of the hope they had nursed.

Meanwhile, a strange commotion was apparent among the Indians. Several scouts came rapidly into the camp. Rapid communications were given. Quick orders sent others out. A party of some twenty savages came hastily into camp from the west, bearing every mark of a rapid march.

Those now in camp numbered over fifty in all. There was quick donning of arms and loading of rifles. The captives were taken further into the woods, and placed in a sheltered spot by the stream under the charge of four old braves. A look of serious expectation pervaded the entire camp. There was evidently fear of an immediate attack.

CHAPTER XII.

A FOREST FIGHT.

The savages had thrown up a slight barricade of felled saplings to the east and west of their position. They trusted to the creek and the prairie as defense on the remaining sides. An enemy would hardly venture to approach from the open ground.

The attacking party on the island had been unprovided with rifles, but there were an abundance of rifles now visible, and the Cherokees bore the reputation of being very skillful in the use of this weapon.

A number of the warriors were sent out to the right and left of their position, probably on scouting duty.

Suspense followed the busy preparation which had occupied them for a half hour. Most of the savages lounged about the camp, or stretched themselves on the ground, indolently conversing.

Yet an incessant vigilance underlaid this apparent carelessness. Every sound from without at once engaged their attention. A fierce glare from the eyes, a setting of the lips, a firmer clutch of the weapon, showed that they were ready for battle, no matter when or from what quarter it came.

An hour passed—two hours—yet the scouts continued out, and there were no signs of the threatened attack. Colonel Bowles went vigilantly around the confines of the camp, examining their impromptu barricade with a careful eye, and ordering it to be strengthened at various points. He had a word for every warrior, giving a host of careful directions, and in every way showing himself the shrewd and skillful commander.

These hours of suspense were very trying to the captives. A hope of escape or rescue had risen in their minds at the anticipated onslaught of their friends, and their every nerve was alive to the necessity of seconding these friendly efforts, and availing themselves of any possible opportunity of escape.

This hope was greatly diminished by the next action of their guards. They produced some short, slender ropes, and proceeded to firmly bind their male captives, paying no more heed to the remonstrances of the latter than if they had not spoken.

This done, the females were subjected to the same indignity. Laura's hands were tied tightly behind her, and a burly savage was about to tie Miss Amberly's in the same manner, when Colonel Bowles, who was passing, spoke a few words to the Indian, who desisted from his purpose, leaving her alone free among the prisoners. Captain Wilson lay helplessly on the ground, bound hand and foot.

"Miss Amberly shall not be tied," said the chief to her. "She will not escape. She had better not try."

He pointed significantly to one of the guards, whose hand clutched the handle of his knife—a hideously, cruel-looking savage.

She shuddered, and dropped her eyes. She was seated on the low creek bank beside her fellow-prisoners, too sad-hearted to even reply to the chief.

"Colonel Bowles means well to the fair-haired lady. She need not fear," continued the chief. "No harm shall come to her. She is a brave maiden. Let her be prudent."

He spoke to the guards in the Indian tongue, pointing to the captives as he did so, and then passed on in his round of inspection.

The suspense of the unfortunate prisoners increased almost to agony, as the minutes lengthened into hours, and the silence continued unbroken. The savages appeared to share this feeling. Their stoicism gave place to a display of restlessness. They walked uneasily about the camp, nervously clutching their knives, their dark faces full of fierce energy.

Suddenly the silence was broken by the sharp, clear, distant sound of a rifle shot.

As if it were a fixed signal, each Indian sprang to his post; the large trees of the forest adjoining the eastward barricade concealed each its red marksman; weapons were held in readiness, and an air of eager expectation pervaded the whole savage force.

At the command of Colonel Bowles, about ten of the warriors stationed themselves at the line of the western barricade, to protect it against possible assault, though the alarm had come from the east.

Five minutes more passed, and a succession of dropping shots were heard, as if the scouts were engaged in battle with the advancing troops. The warriors grew intensely excited. One or two of them made an effort to leap the barricade to go to the aid of their scouts, but a stern command from Colonel Bowles recalled them to their stations.

The shots continued and seemed approaching. The scouts who had been sent out to the west now fell back within the lines, speaking a few words to the chief, and quietly taking their stations. Everything was clear in that direction, and the rifle shots had recalled them.

The wood was somewhat open to the east, and through the vista of the tall trees dusky forms now appeared, retreating slowly from tree to tree, loading and firing as they did so at a yet invisible foe.

They continued to retreat in this stubborn manner until within a hundred—fifty—twenty yards of the rude barricade.

The ranks of the foe were now plainly visible, wearing the plain uniform of the Texan rangers, and advancing cautiously from tree to tree, with all the prudence of old Indian fighters.

From where they stood the barricade was not visible, or appeared as a thicket of low bushes behind which their antagonists might seek protection. They knew the general, yet not the exact position of the Cherokee encampment, and none of the white scouts had reported this lately built line of defence.

The rangers then, heedless of what lay before them, suddenly broke from cover and rushed upon the few Indians who had been keeping them at bay, firing rapidly as they advanced.

The half dozen Indian scouts returned the fire of the troops, and in their turn broke and ran for their line of defence. Two of them fell under the deadly aim of the sharpshooters. The remainder sprang hastily into the camp and at once took cover.

Several of the rangers had fallen. The remainder fiercely followed up the flying Indians.

"To cover! to cover!" cried the clear voice of their commander, as the nature of the supposed thicket revealed itself to his experienced eye. "We are running like blind fools into an ambuscade!"

His command was enforced by a full volley from the Indians. But for the open rank preserved by the rangers this close volley would have been terribly destructive. As it was, a half dozen fell, dead or badly wounded, and several others sought cover, with bleeding wounds.

The battle now raged fiercely, though with little effect. The troops outnumbered their savage foes, yet dared not charge in the face of certain death over the obstruction. They were too well aware of the skill of the Cherokees with the rifle.

But they were as good Indian fighters as the savages themselves, and concealed themselves with much skill behind the trunks of the trees. On both sides a close watch was kept up for any appearance of a limb or portion of a body from behind the sheltering tree trunks, and each inadvertence of this kind was sure be rewarded by a bullet.

For fifteen minutes this covered fight continued, a succession of dropping shots from either side sustaining the excitement of the combat.

But both soldiers and savages were too cautious to expose themselves, and only the eagerness on either side for a shot at their antagonists gave any opportunity to draw blood.

A number of slight wounds had been given, and one Indian had fallen, shot through the head in a hasty attempt to to fire.

The usual expedients of such a fight were resorted to. Hats were thrust partly out from the trees. Clothes, apparently covering a portion of the body, were exposed. These and other schemes were intended to draw the fire of the opposite party, and cause them to partly expose themselves in doing so.

But both Indians and whites were too wide awake to these expedients to be easily deceived, and the combat continued with very little result for the quantity of powder burned.

This could not continue. Both parties were uselessly wearying themselves. They were both too alert and cautious for any serious injury to result to either side. Some diversion must be made, or the rangers would have to acknowledge themselves repulsed.

The diversion came from the Indian side. Colonel Bowles had stood some distance back from his men, watching the combat with eagle glance.

The warriors who had been stationed on the western side of the camp, grew restless under their forced inaction, and showed a disposition to steal across to the other side and take part in the combat progressing there.

The chief stopped several of them in this effort, and sent them back to their posts. The wounded chief, Lone Star, now for the first time appeared from the cabin in which he had been resting. He seemed much refreshed by his repose, and looked round with an intelligent eye upon the surroundings, appearing to take in the whole situation at a glance.

A rapid colloquy ensued between him and Colonel Bowles, in which their gestures indicated that all the features of the fight were taken into earnest consideration.

It ended in Colonel Bowles advancing to the guard of the western barricade, hastily addressing the impatient warriors, and leading them to the edge of the forest adjoining the prairie. Here was a slight screen of undergrowth, along which they advanced in a stooping position, trailing their rifles behind them, and carefully avoiding the making of any sound.

Lone Star seated himself on a large stone partly behind the wigwam, and continued to watch the fight.

The leader of the rangers viewed with great dissatisfaction the position of affairs. Captain Allen was not present. The fifty men, of whom the company was composed, were commanded by a lieutenant. This officer found his hopes of making a successful attack upon the Indians rapidly vanishing, and he was strongly tempted to order a charge of his troops over the barricade.

It would have been no easy matter, however, to give this order to the scattered rangers, without discovering his purpose to the savages, and putting them on their guard.

An unexpected diversion changed the current of his thoughts. From the trees bordering the prairie to the southward came a rapid fusilade of rifle shots, that dropped four of the rangers dead or badly wounded to the ground.

They were outflanked, and subjected to a cross fire, against which they had no defence, while their foes were fully protected.

There was no safety save in retreat. The lieutenant recognized this necessity at a glance, and at once gave the order to fall back. The savages beheld this movement with loud yells of triumph, and fiercely leaped the barricade in pursuit, the flanking party gliding rapidly through the edge of the forest.

The retreat of the rangers was rapid but stubborn. Each man of them had been accustomed to think for himself, and each fought as if only himself were present. Loading as they ran they would stop behind some tree, take sure aim on one of the savages, who were exposing themselves in the eagerness of pursuit, fire, and again fall back.

The impatient and triumphant savages lost more than the rangers in this retreat, but the latter were still outflanked and found it impossible to come to a stand. The flying fight went on through the forest border of the stream, each party carefully avoiding the open prairie.

Yet the camp was not quite deserted. The four guards of the prisoners remained. Lone Star sat immovably on his stone by the lodge side, and five or six other warriors remained in the enclosure.

Well for their projects that they did, for the western side of the encampment was now unguarded, and a small party of enemies were cautiously advancing up the creek side from this quarter.

It had been intended to create a diversion in favor of the main body of the rangers, but these were now in full retreat. The camp lay seemingly unguarded. The small group of prisoners were visible near the stream. With a loud shout the soldiers leaped the barricade, and rushed to this spot.

In a moment a fierce conflict ensued. The old and stalwart warriors who had been stationed as guards, rushed upon the invaders with knife and tomahawk. The latter met them with rifle balls and clubbed weapons.

Blows were given and exchanged. Blood flowed freely. The other Indians who had remained in the camp rushed to the fight. For several minutes the turmoil was terrible, and deadly wounds were given and received on both sides.

But the rangers, in their onslaught, had contrived to get between the captives and their keepers; the knife was used with rapidity, several ropes fell to the feet of the freed captives, who hastily sought the shelter of the forest in the rear.

Captain Wilson, and Miss Amberly and her maid, had been placed a little eastward of the other prisoners, and the struggling Indians had worked down between them and the rangers.

Captain Allen, for it was he that commanded this small detachment, looked eagerly round for some vestige of the lady whom he had promised to rescue. His eye fell on Miss Amberly. At a glance he recognized the likeness to the father, and with a burst of soldierly zeal he flung himself on the savages, sword in hand, striving to hew his way through to the captives.

A number had already fallen on each side, but the rangers seemed to have rather the best of it.

But now a powerful reinforcement to the savage ranks appeared upon the field. With a fierce warwhoop, the gigantic chief rushed forward, his sound right hand grasping a huge war-club. He met Captain Allen face to face, parrying the sword blows of the latter with a skillful handling of his weapon, and striving for an opportunity to get a blow at the unprotected head of the soldier.

Nellie Amberly had not beheld this effort for her release with unconcern. All her native energy of character was roused by the near approach of freedom, and she looked around for some means to aid the efforts of her friends.

Fortunately her hands were free. A knife of one of the Indians had fallen near her. To seize this and sever the bonds of her maid and Captain Wilson was the work of a moment.

Her captors were too busily engaged to heed her movements. The passage up the creek was unobstructed. The fugitives hastened in this direction, leaving the fierce combat behind them.

But the rifle shots which had preceded the hand-to-hand conflict had reached the ears of the main body of savages. A dozen of these hastily returned from their fight with the rangers. The fugitives suddenly found themselves in the centre of a group of scowling and red-handed savages. Fortunately, Colonel Bowles was with them, or the upraised tomahawks might have descended with fatal effect on the heads of the recaptured fugitives.

In a moment they were all securely bound, and left on the ground, under charge of one of the Indians, while the others rushed to the fight.

The shouts and uproar of the conflict grew louder, but the unlucky captives could see the fearfully thinned band of their friends slowly retreating, and being driven back, step by step, into the woods. In a few minutes they disappeared among the trees, the sounds of battle growing fainter.

The attack upon the Indian camp had failed, except in the release of part of the prisoners.

Several of the Indians were now seen returning, Lone Star with them, and in their midst a bound prisoner. A glance told the captives that it was the officer who had just tried to rescue them. The chief had broken Captain Allen's sword, felled him to the ground, and made him prisoner.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE EFFECTS OF A SUNBEAM.

If the curious things in science were communicated rather than the materialistic, as presented by Professor Tyndall and others, both profit and great pleasure would be the result. Take in its contrast the effects of a sunbeam, for example, and one sees the grand result of the most gentle and powerful, and yet variable and versatile, forces. As painted by an artist pen, we see that:

The most delicate slip of gold-leaf, exposed as a target to the sun's shafts, is not stirred to the extent of a hair, though an infant's faintest breath would set it in tremulous motion. The tenderest of human organs—the apple of the eye—though pierced and buffetted each day by thousands of sunbeams, suffers no pain during the process, but rejoices in their sweetness, blesses the useful light. Yet a few of those rays, insinuating themselves into a mass of iron, will compel the closely-knit particles to separate, and will move the whole fabric with as much ease as a giant would a straw. The play of those beams upon our sheets of water lifts up layer after layer into the atmosphere, and hoists whole rivers from their beds, only to drop them again in snows upon the hills or in fattening showers upon the plants. Let but the air drink in a little more sunshine at one place than another, and it desolates a whole region in its lunatic wrath. The marvel is that a power which is capable of assuming such a diversity of forms, and of producing such stupendous results, should come to us in so gentle, so peaceful, and so unpretentious a manner.

EVERY YEAR of our lives we grow more convinced that it is the wisest and best to fix our attention on the beautiful and the good, and dwell as little as possible on the evil and the false.

THE only wages never reduced—the wages of sin.

THE YEAR'S LAST HOURS.

BY R. D. L.

A spirit haunts the year's last hours,
Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers;
To himself he talks:
For at eventide, listening earnestly,
At his work you may hear him sob and sigh.
In the walks
Earthward he boweth the heavy stalks
Of the mouldering flowers.
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly,
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

The air is damp, and hush'd and close,
As a sick man's room when he taketh repose
An hour before death;
My very heart faints, and my wholesome grieves
At the rich moist smell of the rotting leaves,
And the breath
Of the fading edges of box beneath,
And the year's last rose.
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly,
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

WRUNG FROM THE GRAVE;

OR,

The Stolen Heiress!

BY MARY E. WOODSON,

AUTHOR OF "A WOMAN'S VOW," ETC.

[This serial was commenced in No. 7, Vol. 54. Back numbers can be obtained from all newsdealers throughout the United States, or direct from this office.]

CHAPTER XL.

THE FAREWELL.

"So, Walter," said Mr. Leslie, with a frown, "you are the general choice, after all, for this expedition to India. Mr. Danvers had a secret preference for Manning, I believe; but I scarcely thought that would do. He is a good young man, and a very promising one, but lacks experience. I did not wish the suggestion of your name to come from me, but you should construe it in the light of a request. Mr. Danvers assures me, however, that you have voluntarily solicited the appointment."

"As I stated to him, sir," replied Walter, readily, "if I can serve you equally as well by being there, I should esteem it another, and not the least, mark of your favor to be allowed to go."

"You have yourself to serve also," returned his benefactor; "you are a young man now, and must not forget that, Walter. Here or there, you will soon have returned to me all the money I have ever expended on you, while my obligations to you have already run largely on interest."

"You are kind enough to say so, sir," replied the young man, earnestly, "and this is an account which I don't think we will ever know exactly how to settle, as it presents the novel feature of two men claiming to be debtor yet denying the existence of a creditor. If then, as they tell me, I have Mr. Danvers' and your confidence to the extent that any other man has, I will ask you to send me, even for my *own good*. I shall work with redoubled energy there," and Walter seemed suddenly much excited. "As a favor to *me* then, sir, let me go, if you please. I am miserable here; I hate New York; I shall go mad if I remain here longer!"

Mr. Leslie opened his eyes quite wide at this burst of enthusiasm from the usually serious and placid young man, and answered:

"Wrong, Walter, wrong. You grow morbid over those old, and, forgive me, rather absurd ideas. I thought you had promised to have done with such vain regrets years ago when I went at your request to make inquiries of Payne, the dying criminal, who had charge of you in your youth. He confessed to me, as you remember, that your mother was a lady of gentle birth—nay, even of exalted position—and that you were the child of lawful wedlock."

"But that my father had been a desperate outlaw," replied Walter, bitterly. "Ah, sir, how can I hold up my head to repel the insolent sneers of those who take advantage even of their lack of information upon this subject to taunt me as far as they dare?"

"They who are base enough to do so should be beneath your contempt," replied Mr. Leslie, sternly. "Besides, the story of your father was, as I believed at the time, a trumped-up fiction of that desperate felon to account for your having fallen to his charge. He would only promise me that I should hear the whole story when he was released from prison, and that it would astonish me very greatly."

"I, too, have dared to hope that it might be untrue," replied Walter, excitedly. "I have been over all the old prison records and police reports of the times to which he must have belonged, and I have found no one bearing any resemblance to the person he has described."

"Then why, as I insist, should you permit yourself to be annoyed farther? Rather let that old past bury its dead. If you have no name, honor the one I have given you. Mount upward, as you have the ability to do; absorb the world in your present and future, and it will have no disposition to point the finger of scorn at your past. Or, if your achievements invite inquiry, meet it with a ready answer. Tell your inquisitors that you come from the bosom of the *people*, for there is more aggregate hero worship in this old republic than you seem inclined to believe. Only endear yourself to the masses, and they will build temples to commemorate the ash-heap from which you were taken. The *arundo lethalis* that pierces you now will be one of your crown jewels then, my boy."

"But at the expense of martyrdom, for it will have drawn my heart's blood," murmured Walter. "Were the man only living now who filled me with such terror in my benighted childhood, I would go to his cell and willingly take his place, if I could do so without crime, for as long a time as he has been there, to gain from him the true story of my childhood."

"Even then the mere knowledge of a name would not benefit you materially, perhaps," replied Mr. Leslie, kindly. "But as it is all not only an impossible, but a very painful dream, pray banish it once and forever, Walter, as you are a true man, and turn with me to matters that immediately concern us as we are. And now tell me what is this idea you have taken up about your ledger and receipts?"

Mr. Leslie attempted to look indifferent now, but his voice was still unsteady.

"You have been robbed, sir," replied Walter, promptly.

"Robbed, Walter! That is a grave charge," said Mr. Leslie again. "Do you suspect any one?"

"I have only stated a fact, sir," returned the young man; "my suspicions have too little foundation as yet to be divulged even to you."

"What is the amount involved?"

"Five thousand dollars."

"Ah! An inconsiderable sum to the house, but a strong temptation to a poor man without principle," Mr. Leslie resumed, "and a warning of trouble to all parties in the future if it be true. We have been still disposed to hope that your usually clear head is for once at fault, and that there must be some blameless mistake. Will you oblige me by pointing out the supposed erasure?"

Walter placed his book upon the table in front of his employer, and bent over him.

"I should not have observed it without your help," replied Mr. Leslie, carelessly; "but now I can trace the marks of an eraser. The new figures are consequently deeper, but they are much like the rest."

"So they think at the house," replied Walter, "but, as I told them, I would swear before a justice, if need be, that I did not do it."

"No one can question the sincerity of your belief," returned Mr. Leslie, in a tone that had more of assertion than he had yet used; "but even your recollection might be fallible. Mr. Vance will tell you that the old account contains an error of your own—one that figures will work themselves into sometimes. It was right in you to state your opinion at once, and you have our promise that the affair shall be attended to without delay. In the meantime, about this Calcutta business? Matters are not going to suit us out there. They have the management too much in their own hands, and we have determined to send out a man we can implicitly trust to look after the interests of "Danvers & Leslie." You are incalculably the best at command, for you are already informed in a great measure as to our foreign relations, and we wish the agent to start as speedily as possible. A labor of twenty-four hours with Mr. Vance, with such other personal instructions as Mr. Danvers and I shall give you, will put you in possession of all requisite information. We have ascertained that the East Indiaman will set sail for Pulo Penang in just three days, stopping only for a time at the Cape of Good Hope *en route*. We cannot spare Vance, and it would be idle to think of starting any one *else* so soon. Do you think you could be quite ready by that time?"

"Easily, sir; the sooner the better!" replied Walter, earnestly. "But, Mr. Leslie, I have been thinking of a remark of Mr. Danvers' as I came out; and, sir, I should not like to start until this matter of which you all seem inclined to make so light has been cleared up. I do not know what aspect it might assume in my absence, for Mr. Dupre, as you remember, has always declined to assume any position in these matters."

"I know," replied Mr. Danvers, quickly. "Dupre was quite right, for I begin to fear he is incureably heedless. He would as soon leave an account-book in one place as another. He can write our letters; and that is all he will do. It is unfortunate to be so careless, but I suppose he cannot help it. If he is not more particular he will need all Mr. Danvers' fortune to keep him going. Now a word between ourselves about young Manning. Is he to be trusted?"

"I would confide in his honesty as implicitly as in my own—in his general judgment, a good deal farther," said Walter, promptly. "His modesty is so great that his virtues may never be widely known; but they exist, sir, in an eminent degree."

"Exactly the opinion entertained by Mr. Danvers," replied Mr. Leslie, still looking down. "I shall go out to-morrow, Walter, and I promise you that Mr. Vance shall make up his report, and the affair, in every way, be as thoroughly sifted as possible. In the meantime, you are to be instructed at once in all your duties, and be prepared to leave on our East Indiaman."

"If perseverance can accomplish so much, you may rely on me, sir."

"Then," replied Mr. Leslie, holding out his hand, while the young man pressed it warmly in his own, "it is settled already, and we will be relieved of much anxiety. By the way, Dupre knows nothing of this matter. Has Manning spoken to you on the subject?"

"No, sir," answered Walter; "I have mentioned it to *him*, and he only expressed a hope, as you do, that it is some error which Mr. Vance may rectify. But, thinking of it as I came up here, it struck me that he was more disturbed about it than he would have me believe."

"One of your fancies, Walter. One of your fancies," said Mr. Leslie, so cheerfully, that Walter was quite deceived as to his real sentiments. "You will be an author some day, for you are a dreamer. I am sure the matter will come out all right in the end. So, one moment more, and I will return a few written instructions to Mr. Danvers."

Not so "right" but that Walter Ward would have stared, in indignant amazement, could he have glanced over Mr. Leslie's shoulder at the contents of the note which the latter had received from his hands but a few moments before, and which the gentleman now reread for the second time. This was what it contained:

Vance and Letsom make out a clear case of robbery, as evident as though I had seen the theft committed. Detective Jarvis has the matter in hand, and we need be under no apprehensions as to the ultimate result. Of the regular employees, only Manning, Temple, and Ward, can, with reason—that is, from circumstantial evidence—be suspected. Temple is rather out of the question. Manning, being in the habit of writing here at night, has been necessarily admitted to partial confidence. I fear greatly for the poor boy; and yet, in my blindness, I would have trusted him to any extent. Jarvis will not express an opinion, and even advises that Ward be sent to India. After Vance's statement to you yesterday, I leave it to you to say how far he can be trusted.

Yours, etc., PHILIP DANVERS.

Mr. Leslie took up a pen, and wrote:

As far as *I* could be, if necessary. Vance is a fool, and you may tell him so, with my compliments. This opinion of him, expressed on yesterday, is confirmed by finding that he could sleep on so unworthy an idea, and not grow ashamed of it. I am sure you are likewise wrong in your suspicions of Manning. Let the matter stand over until morning, when I shall be with you. With your permission, Ward will then go to India. Send Jarvis to me this afternoon, commanding him, previously, to have Temple kept in sight. Let Vance begin his instructions to the bearer, as though nothing had happened. In haste, R. L.

"Your time being, then, very precious, Walter, I will not detain you longer," said Mr. Leslie. "You will call again to take leave of Mrs. Leslie and my daughter; but, go in and have a glass of wine with them now. Unfortunately, I am forbidden to join you," and he looked down half fretfully at his gouty foot.

"As I shall necessarily be engaged up to the moment of embarking, sir, I had better make my adieux to-day," said Walter. "I shall defer the wine drinking, in the hope of seeing you well enough to share it with me as I board the East Indiaman."

"Thank you," replied Mr. Leslie, as Walter arose. "You know the way to the family parlor. You will find the ladies there. Or, you can ring for them."

Walter shook his patron's hand again, and went out into the great hall, after closing the door behind him. He found his way readily enough to the family parlor. He had supposed the room unoccupied on entering, and had turned to give the bell-handle a pull, when he espied a female figure, more beautiful than any of the paintings he had passed, standing in the recess of a window facing the street, fittingly framed in by the priceless curtains of English point lace that fell about her wealth of golden hair like a bridal veil. The face was partially turned from him, but he had no need to look again before speaking. Indeed, he seemed to avoid doing so.

"If I am intruding, Miss Leslie, I trust you will forgive me, when I inform you that it is probably the last time I shall ever be guilty of a similar offence. Mr. Leslie induced me to believe that I should also find your mother here."

"You are incapable of offending me, I think, Walter," replied the young lady, with rather a sad expression in her soft blue eyes, as she turned them full upon him now. "And you could not intrude, for are you not at home? Mamma has just left me; she will be back in a moment, I think."

"If not in your way, then, I will await her return, as I have come to bid you both good-bye."

The young lady looked suddenly out at the street again, though no one was visible there.

"Are you going on another of those tiresome journeys?" she asked.

And it was either the deep hue of the satin damask above her, or she was a shade paler.

"A tedious journey, certainly," replied Walter, with a perceptible tremor in his usually clear voice. "I am about to embark for India."

"India!" she repeated, so slowly, that one might have imagined there was something unusually interesting in the street, at which she still looked. "That is a long way off. You will not be back in many months, then?"

"Nor in many years," said Walter. "I am going there to live, perhaps."

"*To live!*"

The blue eyes seemed as fathomless as that far off ocean he was to cross, and the beautiful face was unquestionably very white now.

"Walter—*brother*—we shall be very sorry to lose you. Amid strange scenes and new pursuits you may forget us, but I shall always remember my earliest, best friend. I can never, never forget *you*, Walter."

"Your goodness far exceeds my merit," he replied, "but not my expectation. To you I owe all that I am, or may be, and if I have won your good opinion in return, I shall wear it as the proudest ornament of my life. Remembering this, I shall be in every respect as though I were at your side, and were indeed your brother. I may be in truth embarking on unknown seas, alone, friendless—except so far as I have been honored by this house—and penniless, but for the bounty of your father. I know what high-sounding words young men can utter about the triumphs they are to win in the battle of life. I trust I shall take with me no supernatural delusions, but in your good wishes I am confident that I bear with me the elements of success. *You* are entering life under brilliant auspices. But, oh, Miss Leslie! oh, Evelyn! if, in the changing confidences of this deceitful world, you should ever need the protection which such a friend or brother could offer, you will appeal to me, *then*, as to one who would gladly sacrifice his life to ensure your happiness."

There was a moment of silence, while each seemed struggling to suppress all emotion. Vain effort, and soon abandoned.

"If such a time should come, Walter," she said at length, with a half sob, "there could be no one, father, husband"—the hue of the sea-shells about the window-ledge was over her alabaster neck and face as she spoke—"none to whose strong arm and ready heart I could appeal with greater confidence, than to yours."

He had clasped her small white hand in his, and was about to murmur something in response, when the door opened and Mrs. Leslie came in.

"What is this about your going to India, Walter?" she asked, with a little fashionable drawl. "I have just looked into the library, and Mr. Leslie tells me it is a settled fact. It is too bad."

Walter repeated that he was to go, and that he had been waiting to bid her good-by.

"Ah, this parting with people we have known a long time is unpleasant. I dislike to think how much Mr. Leslie will miss you. And Evelyn there, really looks upon you quite as a brother," she said, with her pleasantest smile. "You were to be one of her waiters, too, you know."

Walter did not say that he would have been happy to serve her, as politeness may have required. He only regretted the disappointment to her, though his place might be readily, and, perhaps, more pleasantly, filled by another, and was silent again.

"As you cannot be here," Mrs. Leslie continued, "it is quite a pity, Eva, dear, that he did not go early enough to ship us some of the beautiful merchandise they have there. Walter has such good taste, that I am sure we might have trusted him to select us some cashmere shawls, my love."

Evelyn did not reply; and Walter, regretting the dispatch he must use, extended his hand in farewell. When he had clasped her jeweled fingers, and, turning, bowed briefly over those of the daughter, Mrs. Leslie was still speaking.

"Now, be sure, Mr. Ward, and don't get shipwrecked. And you have read about the climate; don't eat too much of the fruit, immediately after getting there. That is the way so many of our people going out die of the cholera, or some other dreadful thing. But, above all, beware of the jungles. I have such a horror of wild animals, that I shouldn't even like you to speak of them in your letters to Mr. Leslie, which he always insists upon reading to me."

And so she bowed Walter out at the door, and he went back to his employer's counting-room and its duties, taking courage from his own brave heart and resolute brain, having seen her for the last time in this life.

Oh, India, with your jungles! are there not pangs that rend our souls, with a far keener anguish, in the very bosom of civilization, than ever tiger, or other four-footed beast could inflict on these perishing bodies of ours!

CHAPTER XLI.

COVERING A FRAUD.

"Are you ready, Mr. Vance?"

It was Rochester Leslie's voice that questioned in an almost peremptory tone, though he was usually bland and courteous to the last extent to those who served him.

The three men were alone in their business-room this morning. Mr. Leslie occupied one of the red morocco chairs, but he frowned as though the foot that still wore a richly embroidered slipper was causing him severe pain. Mr. Danvers had another seat, rather farther removed from the register; leaned his chin upon his upraised palm, and appeared thoughtful, even to perplexity.

Mr. Vance, the man of figures, an important personage in the house, who always handles an abundance of cash belonging to other people, though never any miraculous quantity of his own, stood before them on the rug, an exquisite piece of workmanship, representing a sea or ocean, with the East Indiaman in the distance, and a whale spouting water, as it would seem, into the sky. Mr. Vance was heedlessly crushing this whale with his foot, standing quite squarely on the sea-monster's back, while he held an open ledger in his hand.

"Shall I ring for Mr. Ward?" Mr. Leslie followed with a second question.

"Let me save you the trouble," Mr. Vance replied, reaching for the bell. "As well now as next week, or ever, sir. I have learned my lesson, and have only the arranged story to repeat."

"It strikes me that your scruples are over nice, Vance," said Mr. Danvers, as he stayed his hand for one moment. "We must fight the devil with fire, you know. The matter disturbs me to such an extent that I would give treble the amount to ascertain, at once, the real perpetrator of the deed; though I think we are sure to do so in time. Jarvis has the number of all the missing notes?"

"He has, sir," Mr. Vance replied, "and, I am confident, will bring it all, eventually, to light, as you say. But it comes awkwardly to me, I must confess, to have to tell these men that my books and safe correspond with the altered figures, when they must either think me a fool or a knave like themselves, knowing as they do that they have the money in their own pockets."

"Not more than you or I have," answered Mr. Leslie, promptly. "I am surprised that you have so little knowledge of human nature, Vance. We know you well enough, too, to see that you demur to the plan only as it comes from Jarvis; and that you would never have done so, had it originated with us. But you are informed that it has our hearty approval. Go to work, then, and carry it out, at once."

The bell rang out clearly now, and the door opened a moment afterwards to admit Walter Ward and St. Julian Manning.

"Walk in, gentleman," said Mr. Leslie, with his old courtesy. "My lame foot forbids my rising. Mr. Vance, will you oblige us by informing us of the result of your investigations in the matter to which Mr. Ward has called our attention?"

Mr. Vance looked down at the whale under his feet, as though nothing would delight him more than to decapitate it at once, and answered slowly:

"I have only to say that Mr. Ward is wrong, entirely wrong, as I have told him all the while. His entries are correct as they stand, by comparison with the cashier's accounts and with the bank. Here is a brief summary, which you are at liberty to inspect."

Walter Ward's face wore a blended look of amazement, humiliation and gratification.

"I cannot imagine the cause of such obstinate oblivion on my part," he said, with a still puzzled expression. "And I should be inconsolable at the thought of my unworthiness of the confidence you have imposed in my ability, gentlemen, were it not for the consolation that any unjust suspicion, thrown upon others by my blunder, will be instantly removed."

He turned his eyes towards St. Julian Manning with a look that was eloquent of humble apology; but that young man was staring, first at Rochester Leslie, then at Mr. Vance, and lastly at Philip Danvers, in wild incredulous amazement.

"How, sir?" he stammered. "How can this be so, when you yourself told me——"

"Never mind what I told you, St. Julian," interrupted Mr. Danvers, hastily. "While we gladly excuse Mr. Ward for one error, I may be pardoned for another. Mr. Vance has told you there is no money lacking; so the honesty of no one is impeached. With this assurance we are ready for business again. And now, Mr. Ward, as you have not an instant to spare, Mr. Vance will again assist you in overlooking the transfer of our invoices to the books you are to take with you. And while these copies are being made, you can come to us for any additional instructions."

Mr. Vance pressed his heel, with a parting anathema, upon the whale, and hurried toward the door with the air of a man who is anxious to escape from some unexplicable display of irritability or nervousness. And Walter followed, with a little laugh.

"I don't think I shall ever have confidence to express an opinion of my own with any positiveness again," he said, as they went out.

Mr. Danvers had turned his back to the door. He saw that young Manning had likewise risen to take leave, but had paused again, only a few paces beyond him. While he attempted to appear oblivious of this fact, Mr. Leslie looked up with an expression of quickened, lively emotion.

"What is it, Mr. Manning?" he asked. "Have you made another discovery, and are you too timid to divulge it after Ward's failure? We need not all be in error. Speak out."

"Oh, what a noble error is yours, gentlemen!" cried the young man, in the keenest agitation, his face, fair as a woman's, lighting up with a vivid glow. "I; *have* made a discovery, Mr. Leslie—a discovery that astounds me—for magnanimity, such as you have displayed, I have never witnessed before. Mr. Danvers, oh, tell me, sir, why is this amiable fraud put upon us? It is done to shield some one, I am convinced. Mr. Vance, John Letsom—for he has been here—were not all wrong. I beseech you, tell me who it is that you suspect. For Walter Ward, he is as remote from suspicion as either of you. I—I alone am in a position which—which——"

"'He who excuses, accuses himself,' is an old proverb," said Mr. Danvers, interrupting him a little testily. "No one has brought any charge here, St. Julian, and until they do, you will oblige me by resuming your post, unquestioningly, with the rest. Ward is satisfied that we declare him blameless. Why should not you be?"

"Because, sir," replied the young man, eagerly, "not knowing all that I do, he believes the untruth that Mr. Vance has just told us—it seems to me not entirely with his own consent."

Mr. Danvers turned about, with that old, haughty, repellant air of his—so different from the general demeanor of his partner—and replied, with severe emphasis:

"Your knowledge, whatever it may be, seems oppressive, Mr. Manning; nevertheless, I command you to bear it alone and in secret. We each have a great deal of work before us; and, I make no doubt, Mr. Vance is waiting for you at this moment." He waved his hand, in intimation that he desired the subject to be dismissed, once for all; and St. Julian Manning bowed in submission, and went, half staggering, out at the door.

"At my time of life," said Mr. Danvers to Mr. Leslie, with bitter melancholy, "I would freely have given half my possessions that this should not have happened."

"My dear friend," replied Rochester Leslie, very cheerfully, "it is but right that we should learn to value people at their true estimate. I know how you have loved this boy—seemingly a thoroughly correct lad—with more than an ordinary regard, for the unusual personal resemblance he bears to your own family; but you should remember how merely accidental is that likeness, and that he has no claims upon you but such as you generously accorded to the last request of one who had put herself beyond all hope of appealing to you, even in her own behalf, by her unfortunate alliance with one of my name, for Arnold Leslie had my blood in his veins, though, thank heaven, he could claim it but as a cousin in the third degree!"

"He was, as you say, a distant kinsman, whom you rarely met," replied Mr. Danvers, in a choking voice. "But, oh, Rochester! Leonora was my own neice—poor George's only daughter—whom I had learned to love as I did my own unfortunate Eugene; and to think that she may be living still, or else that she has perished in shame and destitution, is harder to bear even than the sudden death of my poor boy!"

"A living infamy is even worse than the actual digging of a grave," replied Mr. Leslie, seriously. "But, as I have said all these years, I am convinced that she is dead. A nature such as hers could not long have survived the consciousness of shame, and in the letter she wrote you in behalf of Mrs. Manning, this young man's mother, she told you that death was knocking at the door for her even then."

"Yes, but her constitution was a good one, and other causes may have led to unnatural depression. I cannot help fancying that she will be heard from again, if not in person, at least through her children."

"An idle dream, my dear friend," returned Mr. Leslie, with sorrowful earnestness; "a not unnatural one under the circumstances, but still an idle dream, believe me. If she were yet living, and apart from him, as we were told; if a child existed, through whom Arnold Leslie could claim her fortune, or that which might descend to her heirs from Guy Fisher, can you imagine he would have been silent all this while?"

"My God! has he nothing to fear from me?" Mr. Danvers cried out.

"Calm yourself, Mr. Danvers. Such agitation is distressing to us both, and can be productive of no good. We all know that Arnold Leslie was charged with the murder of his wife's father before he escaped from our midst; but a half-uttered exclamation of poor George was all the evidence that could be had, and you know your wife's sister, who reached the room before you had caught sight of the retreating robber's figure, declared the thing impossible. Caspar Lenox, too, as you remember, was strongly suspected, and not without reason."

"I can never believe that Lenox could have been provoked to such fiendish retaliation," replied Mr. Danvers. "It was too little in keeping with the whole story of his life; nor yet do I believe Arnold Leslie voluntarily guilty, though he knew that the miserable remnant of my brother's life kept him at that time out of her fortune when he had squandered his own. The whole affair was involved in a mystery that I suppose we now indeed may never hope to solve, and I shall go sorrowing and broken-hearted to my grave."

"Nay," said Mr. Leslie, kindly, "you have yet a great work in life to do, and there may be happiness in store for you still. You were speaking a few days since of your wife's neice, Miss Violet Lowe. May I tell you that my daughter is under the impression that she has discovered the cause of her increased reserve."

"Ah! what does she suppose it to be? I am more deeply interested in discovering than you can imagine."

"She firmly believes her to be in love with your secretary."

"St. Julian Manning?"

"Yes."

"A painful mistake," returned Mr. Danvers, quickly. "She has provoked me by a course of conduct toward him that is even contemptuous in the extreme. She burdens him with commissions as though she was paying him in money, and never expresses the slightest gratitude for any exertions he may make in her behalf. And yet, strange as it may seem to you, I should have been highly gratified but one week ago to have been persuaded of the correctness of your daughter's impression. Violet will doubtless inherit half of my property, but she will have to change greatly before she can endear herself to me as this boy has done."

At this moment Cecil Dupre lounged in with some questions relative to his own duties, and the subject of discussion between the two friends and partners was finally dismissed. When he had left them again Mr. Danvers looked at his watch, and finding it already three o'clock went out to his carriage, that stood in waiting, and was driven home.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

FACETIÆ

A DUTY—Attentions paid your wife.

"SHEAR" NONSENSE—Clipping jokes.

IT is never too late to marry or to mend.

A WIFE'S secret—Her opinion of her husband.

A PLEASURE—Attentions paid to some other woman.

WHERE to look for Charlie Ross—In the Cunard line.

THE apple Eve longed for, and ate at last, must have been a pine-apple.

INSCRIPTION on a fence in Missouri: "Noboddy hich no husses 3 this fens."

"A SPLENDID ear, but a very poor voice," as the organ-grinder said to the donkey.

"THE Beautiful Snow" is beautiful only to people who have comfortable homes, and are comfortably clad.

MAUD—"Quite a nice party at Mrs. Mellefleur's, wasn't it?"

Claude—"Yes; very quite, indeed—really, most quite."

THE reason why women's teeth decay earlier than men's is not because of the friction of the tongue on them. It is the sweetness of their lips.

YOUNG BRIDE—"Was she his own darling duckums?"

Young Bridegroom—Yes; she was his onty, donty, darling duckums."

Exit elderly married man, enraged and disgusted.

"OH, my life, my love, my sweetey, may Heaven's angels whisper golden words as they kiss your peachy cheeks!" wrote a lover to his sweetheart only eight weeks ago, and now he wishes the angels would whisper to him how his breach of promise suit is likely to end, as his lawyer frankly says *he* can't tell.

"I WOULD marry you," said a lady to an importunate lover, "were it not for three reasons."

"Oh, tell me," he said, imploringly, "what they are, that I may remove them!"

"The first is," said she, "I don't love you; the second is, I don't want to love you; and the third is, I couldn't love you if I wanted to!"

IF a young lady has a brother, and that brother wears a brown felt hat worth two dollars, and he should come home late at night from seeing some friends, with that hat crushed into "forty-eleven shapes," the young lady should immediately seize it, and by strewing a rosette of velvet and some ribbons over it, she would have a hat of the latest style, worth about ten dollars.

HIS arm had stolen round her waist, and her fair young head rested lightly on his bosom. The October moon shone softly down upon them as he painted a bright picture of the happy future when she should become his beautiful bride. He paused at last in the fervent outpouring of his hopes, and the deep melody of his tones were echoed by the silvery sweetness of her flute-like voice, as she murmured softly: "Yes, love, yes, and then, too, we'll have buckwheat cakes and sassiges for breakfast every blessed morning, won't we, dear?"

OUR OWN SPHINX.

[Communications intended for publication in this department, should be addressed to care of Editor SATURDAY EVENING POST, Philada.]

HIDDEN RIVERS.

1. Katie, do be calm.
2. Asa, come and help me.
3. I shot an elk in Maryland.
4. The river is rapid and dangerous.
5. Sambo.—"Massa, did you eber see de pen ob Scott?"
6. Never mind, Pat! Apsco is a friendly Indian.
7. I assure you, Kenne, Beckie loves you.

LITTLE ONE.

SQUARE WORDS

1. A river of Europe. The color of a horse. A slang expression. A precious stone.
2. To pass to or from. Eternally. A river in Europe. A low carriage.
3. To influence. To decrease. A female's name. A division of time.
4. A ploughshare. To look shyly. A sect. A county in England.

LITTLE ONE. RAJAH.

ENIGMA.

I'm cradled in the bosom of a pure and blushing rose;
Indeed, each flow'r that ever blooms my presence doth disclose.
The murmur of the summer breeze floats all unheeded by,
But in sweet echo's ling'ring tones I slowly faint and die.
I come in early morning—on every fleecy cloud,
And also help the gloom of night your pathway to enshroud.
I ne'er was known to cross your palm, as do the gipsies all,
But if you took me from your foot, you very soon would fall.
Without me you could never go abroad or seek to roam,
And yet, the strangest thing of all—I'm always found at home.
To matrimony I'm inclined, and never from the side
Of any bridegroom do I stir, but cannot touch the bride.
I fall in love, am constant, too, and conversant with joy;
In all your hopes I take a part, though coupled with alloy.
I am too prim to join the dance, though one in every throng,
And while I music fain would shun, I revel in the song.
You gladly welcome me each morn whene'er the postman knocks,
And wanting me would have to go without your Christmas-box.

DAISY H.

[Answers to the above will be given in No. 24.]

Answers to "Our Own Sphinx." No. 18, Vol. 54.

ENIGMA.—Water.

CHARADES.—1. Don-keys. 2. Shylock. 3. Sun-shade. 4. Husband-man.

VERBAL CHARADE.—Bismark.

DECAPITATION.—Blast, last.

WOMAN'S AGE.—1. Cour-age. 2. Foli-age. 3. Herb-age. 4. Cabb-age. 5. Vint-age. 6. Sans-age. 7. Parson-age. 8. Peer-age. 9. Carri-age. 10. Marri-age. 11. Lugg-age. 12. Vicar-age. 13. Cribb-age. 14. Dot-age.

I AND MY SWEETHEART.

BY MORTIMER COLLINS.

I and my sweetheart spelt together;
Our ages were together ten:
How sad to waste the sweet spring weather
In the old dame's fusty den!
White lilac, fragrant, graceful, cool,
Tapped at the window of the school;
Alas, too well our doom we knew—
There was a tremulous birch-tree, too.

I and my sweetheart dwell together;
Many tens are our ages now:
Vanished is youth's gay violet weather,
Stays the old dame's frowning brow.
Dame Nature keeps the eternal school,
And grows keen twigs to flog the fool;
But looks away, with pardoning eye,
When we play truant, my love and I.

FACE TO FACE;

OR,

SINNING FOR HER SAKE!

BY THE AUTHOR OF "GERALD," ETC.

[This serial was commenced in No. 3, Vol. 54. Back numbers can be obtained from all news-dealers throughout the United States, or direct from this office.]

CHAPTER XLV.

AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

Herbert slept calmly the night before his execution.

Nat was less tranquil. He tossed all night on his hot bed, trying to pray, trying to find resignation, and yet ending always in the hopeless cry for life, dear life!

The chaplain was with him early, but though Nat listened eagerly to his expostulations and joined in his prayers, he could not get at the comfort he sought.

Mr. Hardman stayed some time, and then he went to Herbert's cell. He found him already up, and his countenance patient and serene. He greeted him with outstretched hand and a faint smile on his pale lips.

"I am glad to see you, sir; your presence is a great consolation to me. I believe it is past seven o'clock, is it not?"

Herbert asked this question so quietly that Mr. Hardman, who fully believed him to be innocent, was surprised.

"My friend," he said, gently, "I hope you fully realize your position. Even to save you pain, I would not have it otherwise."

"I do perfectly, and yet my entire resignation surprises myself, for I have so much now to make life precious."

"The joys of life can never equal the joys of heaven."

"I know that, sir. If I did not, I should shrink before the horror and ignominy of the death I am about to die. You will keep by me to the last, sir."

"You may trust me. I have no other wish or intention."

"What time is it now, sir."

"It wants ten minutes of eight."

At this moment the executioner came in to pinion Herbert's hands. He submitted to this humiliating operation without a murmur, and marched steadily down the long corridor until they came to Nat's cell. Here there was a pause, but it did not last long. The dreary march continued, only there was another unfortunate added to the procession. The church-bells were tolling mournfully, and Herbert caught the sound as his eyes met Nat's. The faces of both men became paler than even before. It was a terrible incongruity that they should be listening to their own death-knell!

When Herbert and Nat appeared on the scaffold, there was a rustle of many heads turning eagerly toward them and a hoarse murmur of suppressed excitement. Herbert stood upright and calm above them, for he had caught the glance of a white face at the opposite window, and the beautiful dim eyes guided his own upwards.

Once Milly, in face of all, without shame or hesitation, kissed her hand passionately to the condemned man, and he returned this gesture by a smile, so fraught with love and resignation, that Milly had hard work to keep from weeping. But she had resolved to conquer her emotion for his sake; to put it aside until she could be of no use to her lover. The effort was heroic; but Herbert, though he divined what she must be enduring, by the snowy whiteness of her face and lips, could not see how the little hands were so tightly clenched that the fair skin was blackened and bruised, or how the noble breast of this faithful creature beat so high in her throat that she trembled lest it should stifle her before her mission was accomplished.

The church clock struck eight. Herbert stole one more glance at Milly, then lowered his head and prayed devoutly. He believed that this was the last minute of his life, until he heard a man in the crowd, eager for the horrid spectacle, call out to a comrade, "The church clock is five minutes too fast! The parson does that a purpose, that folks shouldn't be late. They'll go by the town hall, I expect."

Five more minutes to live, then.

And then, while poor Nat was struggling vainly for the peace that would not come, and Herbert was listening to the chaplain's word of prayer, there came a wild, a hoarse swell of many voices, a shout as if an army were approaching to the rescue of some beleaguered city.

Herbert gave one dull glance at Milly, and saw her rise in her seat, transformed, panting, her arms outstretched toward him, her very soul in her eyes, which dilated with a sudden joy that was almost madness.

He looked out on the crowd then, and a woman came through it up to the steps of the scaffold—a wild, gasping creature, with her hair loose upon her shoulders and her dry lips speechless, as she jumped down off the horse she was riding and came crawling up the steps, almost as an animal might.

At the sheriff's feet she threw herself, and tried vainly to articulate, and then burst out in a passionate effort that seemed to nearly rend her chest.

"Save those two men! They are innocent! The murderer has confessed!"

They thought she was mad at first, but they raised her, and then Herbert and Nat both recognized Mary Flax.

She seemed to be fighting against the oppression that stifled her speech; and the sheriff, who was a merciful man, and, moreover, believed her tale in his heart, bade them stay all further proceedings until the poor creature had sufficiently recovered to be able to give some proof of the fact she asserted. In a little while Mary told all—how she was the widow of the murdered man, and, believing she knew who had killed her husband, had set a watch for him, had even pretended love for him, that she might worm out the secret she required to know. "And to-night," she went on, "remembering the wife of Heber, the Kenite, who was justified in her deceit because of the wickedness of her foe, I made a supper and invited my enemy to it; and with honeyed words and flatteries, my life in peril all the while lest he should discover my purpose, I dragged from him the secret of his guilt!"

"Where is he know?"

"He is asleep in my cottage, your honor, where he may be taken if you send at once."

"But what proof have you of all this?"

"Is not his own confession proof enough?" inquired poor Mary, faintly. "I thought that must satisfy all."

"But how do we know that he actually told you this? You have no witness?"

"No. I have the coat he wore when he murdered my husband, stained with blood where his dying head lay, and I think if you bring us face to face, if you let me go with the men who are sent to surprise him, he will fancy it is no use denying anything, and tell the whole truth. But you must let me have plenty of protection, your honor; for so certain as he sees that I have betrayed and deceived him he will kill me."

The crowd, whose better feelings were aroused by this woman's noble action, cheered vociferously, but poor Mary, stupefied with excitement and the terrible suspense of the last hour, fancied they were menacing her, and cowered down close to the sheriff's feet, stopping her ears.

"My good woman, do not be afraid; no one will hurt you. I will go back with you myself to your cottage with half a dozen of policemen, and if we find you have told us the truth you shall be rewarded."

"I don't want any reward, your honor. Right is right; and I couldn't bear the thought of people suffering for what another did."

Herbert and Nat were taken back to prison, and, although the chaplain told them that they must not calculate too much on their new hope being realized, they still dared to dream that God, in His great mercy, had rescued them at the eleventh hour.

The sheriff took Mary Flax in his own carriage, after he had made her drink a glass of wine and eat a few mouthfuls of bread. She was nearly exhausted, but she still held up bravely; Herbert and Nat were not yet saved, they were only reprieved, and she would not give in—she would not even weep any of those tears she had forced back upon her heart all these long, painful weeks, until her work was done, and done well.

As they neared the cottage, Mary proposed that the carriage should be left in the road, and they should go on foot.

"If he were to hear us coming, he would have time to escape, your honor, and he is so violent, I hardly know what might happen."

"That is a good idea," said the sheriff, alighting, and giving a similar order to the men.

Softly walking on tiptoe, they gathered around the cottage, and listened, breathless, for some sign or sound of life within.

"He is there," whispered Mary, presently; "I can hear him breathing."

They lifted the lock cautiously, and entered, one by one, Mary the last.

But Joe, stupefied with his liberal potations, slept on, blissfully unconscious.

"Joe!" shouted Mary, in a high, shrill voice; "get up. You are wanted!"

"Wanted! What the d—l——"

His bleared eyes wandered round the group, and then fixed themselves on Mary in deadly menace.

"Oh! you've done this, eh? You false, cringing hussy. It's lucky I've got the time to pay you out! I don't care for much else but that!"

With a gesture quick as thought, he put his hand into his breast and drew out a pistol, which he pointed at Mary.

There was a sharp report, a groan, a sudden fall, and the unfortunate woman lay on the floor, weltering in her own blood.

"I may as well hang for two murders, as one, while I am about it," said the ruffian, coolly; and he allowed them to bind him, without making the least resistance, and carry him away.

By night a free pardon had arrived for Herbert and Nat, and they were both released.

Milly was waiting for the "Master," and walked down the street, hanging on his arm. Truly, here was the reward of her constancy.

The clouds had passed over, and there was no brighter sunshine in the heavens—although never had a March day been lovelier—than in the hearts of these two happy young people, who had almost forgotten already through what a dismal road they had walked to the sweet valley of love.

"We will go and see how poor Mary Flax is, directly we get to the village," Milly said, turning first to Herbert, and then to Nat, who was made welcome, even at this time, by reason of the troubles he and Herbert had gone through together. "She has saved your lives, and should have your first thought."

"And what about father?" said Nat. "He knows you are coming—I have prepared him for that—and can wait a little while. Poor Mary is sinking fast, I am told, and we may not see her at all, unless we see her soon."

Dr. Robinson was there when they arrived; but the dying woman opened her dim eyes at the sound of their muffled steps, and looked at them anxiously.

"Come here," she said.

They all three stooped their faces down to the pallid lips.

"I am dying for you. Don't let my little ones want."

"From this day they are my children," Nat said. "I meant it, anyway, and I told father so before I was taken to prison; but now it's a duty as well as a pleasure, and I promise you I'll be a father to them, Mary Flax, as long as they and I live."

And faithfully Nat Greysome kept his word.

A faint smile quivered over the lips of the dying woman, and she sighed out her thanks. Then she sank into insensibility, and Dr. Robinson motioned them away.

But there was a great shadow on their happiness, by reason of that noble creature lying there between life and death, unable to receive their thanks, or share their joy—dying slowly; as day dawned, dead!

CHAPTER XLVI.

A DOUBLE WEDDING.

Lina had a notion in her head, and insisted upon being allowed to carry it out. She wished to be married on the same day as Millicent Lowe.

Milly, when she was consulted by Lina herself as to her plan, approved it greatly.

"Only," said Lina, kissing the blushing girl, "papa begs me to say that he has ordered your wedding-dress, and counts upon being allowed to present it to you, as a token of his earnest wish for your happiness, not only on that day, but to the end of your life."

It was a grand wedding-day, indeed, that wedding-day in Lansdown. Milly was made a wife first; but, as she came out of church, Lady Lina was just alighting from her carriage, and went forward to kiss the lovely bride on both cheeks. Wilfred looked on enviously.

He was cured of his folly, now, and yet he could not help admiring Milly, as he would never admire any other woman in this world.

Then Herbert Benson came forward to claim his wife, a little jealous, to tell the truth, of Wilfred's very evident admiration; and Lord Dacre shook him by the hand cordially, and declared that he was rewarded indeed for all his past misfortunes.

But Mr. Carthen, waiting in front of the altar for his bride, was getting the least degree impatient, and Lina, guessing this, hurried in, thrusting a pretty jewel into Milly's hand, as she bade her adieu.

Mr. and Mrs. Carthen went away for their honeymoon, but Herbert and Milly, being humble folks, could do as they liked.

"We'll go somewhere in the summer," said Herbert, "before the busy time comes on, but the country is delightful, just now."

Just now every place would have been delightful to Herbert, but he did not recognize the reason. His own exceeding happiness made the earth seem a paradise, of which Milly was the gentle Eve.

When the wedding-dinner was over, as duty was not to be neglected even on such a day as this, Herbert went into the farm-yard to see that the animals had been properly attended to, and at this minute the maid came in to say that Milly was wanted.

"Who can want me?" she said, but went all the same.

The visitor had been ushered into the little sanded parlor, and there he stood, with his back to the light, as Milly entered. He turned at the sound of her advancing step, and then she recognized Tommy Wilson.

Tommy was dressed to-day with great neatness and care, and his face was grave and intelligent, showing the art he must have used to have been able to keep up his former character of an idiot. Still he looked pale and ill, and oppressed by a kind of sullen, despairing melancholy, which touched Milly in her hour of bright happiness, and would have induced her to speak some gentle words of comfort, only that she remembered suddenly how he had sworn a false oath in order to slay her husband, and this steeled her heart. Tommy looked at her wistfully.

His accent and language were so superior, that Milly's curiosity was roused anew. She said, gravely:

"I want to understand why you deceived us all in the way you did, Tommy Wilson? When you answer this question, I shall ask another, which concerns me nearer, and makes it impossible that I should give you my hand."

"Perhaps you are too joyful to care to hear a sad story like mine."

"If so, I should not have asked you to speak."

"In the first place, my name is not Tommy Wilson."

"I guessed that."

"And I am not the boor I feigned to be."

"That is evident, now, but the motive for such a deception puzzles me greatly."

"I was always a wild lad, and a good mimic, but I never thought to put my powers to the proof, as I have done. My father was a good man, and he did his best to bring me up well. I managed to obtain a tolerable education, not through diligence, but my natural quickness, but I was always in broils. Not only that, my love of mimicry was always giving offence, so that in every way I was a most unfortunate kind of a lad. My mother wept over me, my father declared that I should bring his gray hairs in sorrow to the grave, and I—well, I laughed at them both. At last, the crisis came. One day I fought with a lad in the place who was known to be a great braggart, and a blow of my strong fist in the temple killed him. I had not meant that, though my passion was roused at some taunt of his, and directly I saw that he was dead, I took to flight. Now, you will understand why I pretended to be an idiot."

"For concealment's sake?"

"Yes; I fancied that Tommy Wilson was not likely to be identified with John Masters; and trembling for the consequences of my rash act, I resolved to continue this character until my comrade's death had been forgotten."

"What made you break this resolution?"

"Revenge," he said, hoarsely; "that feeling grew stronger at last than the instinct of self-preservation."

"Ah! who was your enemy, then?" inquired Milly.

"Herbert Benson."

"My husband? Why, he never did you an unkindness in all his life. Quite the contrary; he has spoken for you often when people were inclined to ill-treat you."

"I would not accept any favor from his hands," said the pretended idiot, fiercely. "You loved him, and, therefore, I hated him. It was natural."

"Do you know, John Masters, that you ought to be punished for perjury? And that poor lad, Nat, too, whose life you were trying to take; at least, you could never say that he harmed you."

"No; I had my compunctions there. One evening I had almost spoken to old Mark, and told him that if he would join me in witnessing against Herbert Benson, his son should be saved. But I knew this would betray me in case he should not consent, and so refrained."

"You will have a good deal to answer for, John Masters. It must have been you who stole my husband's cloak to wrap round the body."

"I did."

"How came you to think of accusing my husband of this crime?"

"Because I found that no power but death could quench your love for him. And then, circumstances seemed to suggest the accusation, and bear it out. He was in the wood at the time the murder was committed; he never returned home all that night; he fell into bad ways afterwards."

"Ah! for such a good cause!" said the young wife, proudly.

"Everything he does is right in your eyes," was the bitter, passionate response. "And yet my triumph was very near. I made a bonfire on Lansdown Point, and danced round it with mad delight when I thought it was certain he must die."

"Ah!" she said, shrinkingly, "that was you, too? Every painful circumstance of my life seems to be connected, in some way, with you. I shall be very glad when I have forgotten your very existence."

He fell on his knees, and kissed the hem of her snowy robe.

"Forgive me," he said, "if only because all my wicked schemes have failed so signally, and only served to make your present happiness more trustworthy and secure. What greater punishment could I need than to know that you are my enemy's wife; that you love him as much as you hate me, and will never think of me, even long years hence, without a shudder of abhorence and fear?"

"Yes," said Milly, boldly and scornfully; "at least you have spoken the truth there. I might have pitied you if you had been less wicked; but now——"

There was a shadow on the blind; she saw it, and stopped suddenly.

"My husband is coming. I will teach you how to be merciful to an enemy, by saving you from his just vengeance. Go!"

"You forgive me, then?"

"I am so happy, I will try."

John Masters shrunk into the deep shadow of the wood then, for he feared to be seen, lest he should be taken and called upon to answer for the crimes he had committed. How he had subsisted of late weeks no mortal would ever know, for he had been like a hunted slave, sneaking in the woods at night, and creeping out to beg or buy a morsel of food as opportunity offered—when he thought the men were away, and his fierce looks would frighten the women into acquiescence.

Twice more he saw Milly, and then never again on this side of the grave.

Where he went, or how he fared, who shall tell? In the long after years, his memory became as a dream, dreamt and forgotten.

CHAPTER XLVII.

WHICH ALSO SEES THE LAST OF THE POACHER.

"Is that you, lad?"

Old Mark raised himself on his pillow and looked eagerly towards the door.

"Yes, father," answered Nat, advancing. "Did you want me?"

"The day seems so long when you are away."

Nat came and sat down at his father's side, and took the thin, wasted hand in his rough, brown one.

"Father," he said, "I've got such a piece of news for you. You must get well on the strength of it."

Old Mark's face brightened.

"Master Herbert has given you more pay?"

"He's made me bailiff."

"What, you?" exclaimed the old man, incredulously. "Where's Meak, then?"

"Why, he's going to take Mr. Benson's farm off his hands, and pay for the stock by degrees. He'll have enough to do for himself now."

"How about the old gentleman?"

"He's going to live always with Master Herbert; Miss Milly, that is to say, the young mistress, wishes it."

"Ah, she's a rare 'un!" said old Mark, enthusiastically. "I wish there was more like her."

"It would be a different world if there was, father."

The old man sighed softly to himself, and presently he asked, in a tone of awakened interest:

"When are the children coming home, Nat?"

"Old Mrs. Flax thought you was too poorly to bear the noise."

"Nonsense! Why, they'd cheer me up, laying here so lonely all these hours. Fetch 'em home to-night, lad, will you?"

And so Mary Flax's children were brought to their new home, not only without opposition from the old man, as Nat had feared, but with his cordial concurrence.

The next morning, when Nat went to work, little Mary was sitting perched on the old poacher's pillow, examining his silver hair with a curious kind of veneration and intentness. She nodded patronizingly at Nat, whom she already called "Dadda," as natural as possible; and told him, with sweet imperiousness, "He was to be sure and come home at dinner-time, and not to stay away altogether, as her other dadda did."

It was wonderful what a bright day this seemed to old Mark. Mrs. Flax was still an active woman, and she bustled about, setting things in order, while little Jimmy slept, and Mary, still intent upon old Mark, whom she seemed to look upon as a deep problem, that required a great deal of solving, prattled to him of her dadda up in the skies, until her little head drooped, and she, too, fell fast asleep.

Old Mark began to see now that he was dying. He read this in Nat's sad, tender glances—in Mrs. Flax's anxious attentions—in the manner of his neighbors, who, for the first time in his life, came about him, with many expressions of good-will.

Standing aloof from them all, in the old days, Mark had never made what is called friends, though he had been well liked. Still a poacher was a suspicious character, and to be avoided, for fear of being identified with him, so that old Mark and his son had been left pretty much to themselves.

Now a kind of revulsion took place. It might have been Milly's example—it might have been that Mr. Carthen, hearing that the old man was dying, had come to see him before he went away—but, somehow, people began to make excuses for the old poacher, and declare that, with the dreary life he had always led, it was no wonder he went wrong.

Joe Lay was hanged, and there came no reprieve for him at the eleventh hour. He died like a coward, cringing, and calling out to the last; and in his dying ears rang the wild shouts of the crowd and hoarse cries of detestation and contempt.

When old Mark heard of the execution, he said, gravely, "No man deserves his fate better than Joe Lay."

"Ay, you may well say that," answered Nat, who had looked pale and anxious all day, as if the other's fate had moved him, if only by reminding him of his past peril and near escape; "and when you think, father, that I once liked that man!"

"I never did; I told you to 'ware of him from the first, but you would not listen."

"It might have saved us all a good deal of sorrow if I had. But young people are often heedless, father."

"And old folks, too, sometimes," replied the old poacher, with a sigh. "I wish I'd my time to come over again, Nat."

"I wish you had, with all my heart, father."

"Though I mightn't do no better than I have done, either," added old Mark, reflectively; "there's no telling; it looks bad when we don't get wise until we are too weak to do any more mischief. And, you see, the love of poachin' was bred in me, somehow. I've different feelings about it to what I used to have; and yet, if I was hale and strong, and got out in the woods again, I wouldn't answer for myself. So, perhaps, it's just as well I shouldn't be able."

"You misjudge yourself, father. You wouldn't do any harm now, even if you could, I'll be bound."

The old man shook his head and sighed.

"See how I promised Miss Milly, and yet the minute I saw the birds rising beautifully, just in front of me, I hadn't the heart to resist, Nat—I hadn't, upon my word! It seemed like a fever on me. I brought down two at a shot, and as neat an aim as ever you saw."

Old Mark's wan face had flushed with the excitement of recalling his past feats; but stretching out his hand, it came in contact with little Mary's golden curls just where she lay asleep on his pillow, and the flush died out, leaving him whiter than before.

"The little one is right," he said, softly; "but though I'm so much nearer heaven than she is, I can't see it half so plain."

The twilight began to deepen into night, and old Mark grew silent. Mrs. Flax came for little Mary, but his father seemed so unwilling to part with her that Nat begged she might be left where she was. Presently, finding that he seemed to sleep, Nat stole out and questioned Mrs. Flax:

"Don't you fancy there is a change this evening?" he said, anxiously. "He doesn't look the same, somehow, as he looked this morning."

"He grows weaker as the days go on, that is all," she replied. "Hark!"

"What is it?"

"I thought your father called."

Nat went back as before, but returned again directly.

"He is muttering in his sleep, and moving his hands as if he were trying to clutch at something in the air. Come and see."

She stood over the dying man for a minute, watching him, listening to the murmur of words which spoke only of the far-off past, when Nat's mother was a blooming girl, and Mrs. Flax herself was young and gay.

"Lord love him!" she whispered; "his mind is gone back to when he was a lad. It often happens so, Nat, my dear?"

"Well, granny."

He called her granny, not only because the little ones did, but because he had learned to love her himself almost as they did.

"Can you bear to be told?"

"Told what?"

"Just the truth, Nat."

"Yes, granny."

"The old man is going fast."

Nat bowed his head, and wiped away a tear.

"Never mind me, granny," he said, when she tried to console him. "You see it's having been together all these years makes it so hard now."

"Of course it does. But you've been a good son to him, Nat."

"We never fell out — that's true. Listen, granny, he's talking of mother again now."

But once more old Mark's hot, wasted hand touched little Mary's shining curls, and once more the contact soothed and pleased him. He became quite tranquil and quiet, and presently opened his dim eyes on Nat, wistfully.

"Is that you, lad?"

"Yes, father."

"God bless you, my dear." He spoke so sensibly that Nat hoped he might remain so, but even while the thought was in the heart, the old poacher—true at last, as we always are, to the habits of our past life—raised himself in bed, and lifting his arms as if he had a gun at his shoulder, and was preparing to take aim, said, in a low, thrilling whisper, "Get out of the way, Nat, my boy, it will rise in a minute. Did you ever see such a beauty? And I've learnt a new trick, too, as will bring the pheasants round us as tame as barn-door fowls. That's it!" and he whistled, softly. "That's what the keepers do when they call them to be fed. I was behind Morris the other night, when he'd got them all about him; and here they come now!" added the old man, with a hoarse chuckle of delight. "Can't you hear their wings rustle? The night is thick with them; they make a great wind on us with their haste—the sky is hidden—and—and——"

His voice died away in a rattle, and his hands fell again to their old resting-place among little Mary's curls. The child, unconscious and weary, slept on.

"Ah!"

It was only a sigh Nat thought, but Mrs. Flax came behind him gently, and lifted the little creature away.

"Don't, granny," said Nat, quickly; "you'll disturb him, and he likes to have her there."

Mrs. Flax gave him a compassionate glance, and lowered her voice involuntarily.

"No, my dear," she said, "they must be parted now; for one is asleep, the other dead."

THE END.

THE MEMORY OF THE DEAD.—It is an exquisite and beautiful thing in our nature, that when the heart is touched and softened by some tranquil happiness or affectionate feeling, the memory of the dead comes over it most powerfully and irresistibly. It would almost seem as though our better thoughts and sympathies were charms, in virtue of which the soul is enabled to hold some vague and mysterious intercourse with the spirits of those whom we dearly loved in life. Alas! how often and how long may those patient angels hover above us, watching for the spell which is so seldom uttered, and so soon forgotten.

SIGHT AND OBSERVATION.—The difference between sight and observation is the perpetual distinction which turns up among men, and is at the root of all growth in the lower or the higher wisdom. Many go through life as the figure of a ship goes round the world, and end the voyage with no gain from it, but that they return more battered and weatherbeaten.

A COUPLE OF USEFUL HINTS.

Very often a screw hole gets so worn that the screw will not stay in. Where glue is handy the regular carpenter makes the hole larger and glues in a large plug, making a nest for an entirely new hole. But this is not always the case, and people without tools and in an emergency, often have to fix the thing at once. Generally leather is used, but this is so hard that it does not hold well. The best of all things is to cut narrow strips of cork, and fill the hole completely. Then force the screw in. This will make as tight a job as if driven into an entirely new hole.

Another hint of a similar character may be useful. One often desires to put a staple into a block of stone. The hole is made, the staple inserted, and lead melted and run in. But unless the hole is made with the bottom larger than the top, the lead will in time work out, if there is much jar or side strain on the iron. Besides, the lead itself is liable to some compression, which admits of looseness, especially after being subjected to very hot fires. A much better article is sulphur. If this be melted and poured in around the staple instead of lead, it makes a much more durable job. Besides, it is often more easy to procure sulphur than lead, as every store keeps it that deals in general variety.

HAPPY is the man who is an early riser. Every morning day comes to him with a virgin's love, full of bloom, and purity, and freshness. The youth of Nature is contagious, like the gladness of a happy child. We doubt if any man can be called old so long as he is an early riser and an early walker. And (oh, youth! take our word for it) youth in dressing-gown and slippers, drawling over breakfast at noon, is a very decrepit, ghastly image of that youth which sees the sun blush over the mountains and the dew sparkling upon blossoming hedge-rows.

EXTERNAL SHOW.—How often do we try, and persevere in trying, to make a sort of neat show of outer good qualities, without anything within to correspond, just like children who plant blossoms without any roots in the ground to make a pretty show for the hour! We find fault in our lives and we cut off the weed, but we do not root it up; we find something wanting in ourselves, and we supply it, not by sowing the divine seed of heavenly principle, but by copying the deeds that the principle ought to produce.

LIFE runs not smoothly at all seasons, even with the happiest; but after a long course the rocks subside, the views widen, and it flows on more equably at the end.

PEOPLE who do wrong seldom have any difficulty in finding out excuses and justification for it.

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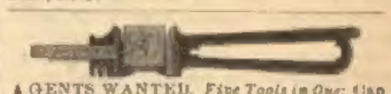

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The Boudoir

FASHION NOTES & QUERIES

[Communications relating exclusively to subjects considered in this department, in order to receive prompt attention, should be addressed to "Fashion Editress" SATURDAY EVENING POST.]

Despite the continued groans from anxious business men over the "hard times" and generally constricted state of the money market, the gay world continues to revel in the usual succession of parties, receptions, etc., incident to "the season." Nor can we remember to have seen more costly or elegant toilettes at any time than many we have lately observed.

One, so charming for its richness of material and artistic combination, added to simplicity of detail, we were shown last week, and solemnly assured that it had just arrived from *la belle Paris*. Our fair friends will doubtless enjoy, or at least we hope they will, a description of this very lovely dress.

The underskirt was of pale blue faille, made very long and entirely plain—no flounce or pleating marred the rich lustre of its flowing breadths.

The overdress of white silk gauze, very transparent, and of a lustre so bright as to win for it the name of "diamond gauze," was made full and long in the back; trimmed around the bottom and half way up the sides with a deep kilt pleating of the same. Instead of the usual apron front, there are two pieces that pass across it, and are attached to the sides by loops of blue faille ribbon, and a large tea rose with foliage. These pieces are each composed of three overlapping pleatings of the gauze, and are put on the front breadth of the silk in a rounded shape, to simulate the popular apron front. At the left side, a ribbon is attached to the loops, and trained towards the back, where it carelessly loops the back breadths of the overdress, and is fastened also with hanging loops and a tea rose.

The corsage is low, and trimmed with pleatings of the gauze, to simulate a bertha; upon the bosom and on each shoulder are knots and hanging loops of faille ribbon, each surmounted by a tea rose with foliage. Short tabs, trimmed with a pleating of the gauze, fall at each side over the hips.

In order to complete the harmony of this toilette, a tea rose, to correspond with those upon the dress, is worn high up on the left side of the head among the puffs of hair.

Another was of pale green silk, trimmed with three flounces of crepe lisse at the bottom, then a puffing of silk, then a deep flounce of honiton lace, a flounce of the crepe lisse, another flounce of lace, which latter was only six inches from the waist. At the back, this last flounce, instead of closing, was arranged in a sort of "jabot" pattern—we can find no other term to describe it—and carried downwards until it reached the bottom of the train. Five double bows of green faille ribbon were placed at regular intervals from the waist to the bottom of the skirt in the centre of this "jabot."

The underskirt was quite bouffante just below the waist, and from beneath the pouf started a garland of pale pink roses, with birds and foliage trailing downwards; it crossed, diagonally, the front of the dress, and low down on the left side was caught by a bow of lace and ribbon. A circular garland completely encircled the neck of the low waist. Latest models from Paris have the back widths quite bouffante just below the waist. We saw a very pretty walking dress of matelasse silk, combined with gros grain of a deeper tint. The shades were violet and dark marine.

The foundation skirt was of the matelasse, violet tinted. The entire front and side breadths were trimmed with alternate flounces of gros grain and bias pieces of the matellasse, this last cut in scallops and bound. The back breadths were plain, and put on in the large double box plait we have so often described. Bows of faille ribbon were placed down the middle of the plait.

The basque was of the matelasse, cuirass shaped, with a small pleated postillion just at the back, made of the gros grain; sleeves half tight fitting to the elbow, frill of gros grain falling from them.

Another costume for the street, of sage-colored cashmere, attracted our attention. Three bias flounces, slightly gathered, and about nine inches in depth, trimmed the back and side widths. A deep kilt plaiting the front.

The apron overskirt was very long, and more pointed than round in front. It was trimmed with yak lace of the same shade, and looped away towards the back in four upturned folds. It ended in two long sash ends, which were carelessly tied in a loose knot, the ends trimmed with lace. The basque was plain, tight fitting, edged with a cord. The back formed a fan-shaped, pleated postillion coat, sleeves with large square cuffs. Small round collar, flaring and ending upon the bust in revers.

Now with this was a hat of gray felt, with the front rim turned up, and held in place by two upright loops of sage-colored velvet, and a small, brilliant humming-bird. A plume of cock's feathers was placed at the left side, and fell over the back. Felt hats, with wide flaring rims, are very much worn, but are exceedingly unbecoming to thin, narrow faces. Small round standing collars of striped linen, with cuffs to match, are very much worn for the morning.

We saw a charming morning wrapper of pearl-colored cashmere, cut princesse shape, with a little more fullness in the back than was formerly the style. It was trimmed down each side of the front, and around the bottom, with a wide bias of violet-colored silk, about seven inches in width, braided in a pattern of palm leaves, in star braid of a shade lighter than the silk. The cuffs of the sleeves, the collar, and revers, the flaps to the pockets, were made of the same silk, similarly braided. Instead of buttons, bows of violet faille ribbon closed the front.

We have seen several suits for little boys, made after an English pattern, which, although not as much to our taste as the tasteful French jacket and deep vest closing at the throat, yet we give a description thereof, thinking that it is best to offer variety. The one which we preferred was of deep purple, the material velveteen. The trousers were plain, and reaching just below the knee, trimmed only with two rows of black silk braid up the outer seam, and a row of black silk buttons. The blouse was gathered into a band at the waist, and came down over the pants—that is, they were not buttoned to it, but held up by suspenders. A broad sailor collar finished the neck. A small pocket was placed on the left side, high up on the breast. Two rows of black silk braid, with buttons to match those upon the pants, finished the front—quite simple, as we see, but said to be very much in vogue for "little men" in England.

A small, round cap of black silk velvet, with two large crochet buttons at each side, and three loops of thick silk cord, passing from one to the other across the front, was worn with the above-mentioned suit.

Heavily fringed ties of India silk, with raised flowers and vines brought in, are very fashionable. Ruches of lace for the neck are still worn. Quite a fancy for coral jewelry is revived.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ANNIE M. R.—Jet trimming and embroidery are still very fashionable.

MRS. L. F. MCMICHAEL.—Make a kilt suit for your little boy like the ones described in previous "Boudoirs," or else a fancifully-trimmed jacket, with vest closed at the throat. We can send very pretty patterns of either suit upon receipt of forty cents each. You can obtain a pattern to fit by sending measure.

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LOVE'S REASONS

BY J. M. B.

Why do I love my love?
Her eyes are deepest blue,
Bluer than sky above,
She's pure and sweet and true.
'Tis not for every grace
That sparkles in her face,
Although each one of these
My wayward fancy please.
I love my love because I do.

I'll tell you of my love;
She tender is and true,
Kind as the turtle-dove,
Too fair for mortal view.
And if you fain would know
Why I must love her so,
I love my love, but I
Could hardly tell you why.
I love my love because I do.

A DETECTIVE'S EXPERIENCE.

THE CHARCOAL-BURNERS.

BY CAPTAIN CARNES.

"He was here on the 10th of this month, going southerly to D—— on government business. He had eight thousand five hundred dollars about him, as I have since learned."

"No trace of him since?"

"Not the faintest."

"And your opinion?"

"My opinion, captain, amounts to but little. General Sturdivant's is more to the point. He believes that it is one more case of absconding defraud."

"Supper, gentlemen," called mine host, and Chief Lawson and myself went down to the well-filled board. We discussed the viands and the case together.

"It does not seem possible. The community for miles here about is perfectly quiet. He went southerly, as I have told you, but we cannot ascertain that he ever touched into D——. Probably took some side track, making a connection with the railroad beyond."

"What sort of a road is it between here and D——? Thickly settled?"

"Bless your soul, no. No one would be likely to meet or notice him, provided he went through to D——, unless indeed he had stopped at the tavern between here and there, which, as he supped here, he would not be likely to do."

"What! Is there another inn in such a short distance from here?"

"Yes; a sort of hostlery."

"Of what reputation in the country around?"

"Tolerable good, captain; it is in a hardly enough prosperous state to be berated."

"Do you say that this is all the building on the road to D——?"

"All worthy of mention. There is, to be sure, a charcoal-burner or two in the pine woods, in the first edge this way."

"He was riding, of course?"

"Yes," my host spoke up now; "he rode a remarkably fine chesnut gelding. Yes, there was something wonderful about the creature, his mane and tail being unusually soft, thick and long. I was busy, very, at the time, and might not have noticed the horse, only as the stranger fumed so about the smithy being absent, and he having to push on with his animal clicking a loose shoe."

"'Boniface,' said he, jocularily, 'I can stand any annoyance better than this. It always suggests highwaymen uncovering their percussion.'

Then, as it grew towards nightfall I got the missing man's description.

"Slight of build, but muscular, light-complexioned, and wearing navy blue."

"And take care of yourself, captain," quoth the chief; "I shall tarry here until you have investigated D—— and got me word of the direction which you intend to go from there. But, as I said, be careful, as this is no less than the third mysterious disappearance of men in this section of country within the last six months. They are as if they had never been on earth, and not the faintest clue to their fate is granted us."

With this exhilarating parting injunction I picked up my valise and strode down the road.

The air was murky and oppressive, and meddlesome whirlwinds kept sifting the dust into my nose and eyes as I passed along.

With no beautiful anticipations of my night's journey I moved forward.

It was quite duskish when I entered the outermost fringe of the extensive pine woods. Here I halted for a brief space, and, throwing down my valise, prepared for a magic transformation peculiar to the trade.

A close-cropped young man entered the dense clump of evergreens—closely-cropped hair and model moustache. There emerged from the thicket an oldish man, with thin gray hair and straggling long beard, in garments evidently the worse for wear, a little stooping, while his valise hung from a stick over his shoulder. My nearest relatives would hardly have recognized me under the changed aspects.

After this metamorphosis I mended my pace as much as my seeming time of life would allow. The night was most unloveable, for the peculiar stillness and uncommon warmth had brought the black flies and mosquitoes out in legions, and they did nothing but buzz and fizz around me and probe my flesh until I was driven to the verge of desperation.

Another two miles, and I heard the low bellowing of distant thunder, while a dense darkness was creeping under cover of the woods. Soon after hearing the first thunder-peal I was conscious of the pungent smell of burning resinous boughs. So I knew that I was nearing the charcoal-burners, and a brisk walk of twenty minutes brought me in sight of the cone-like mounds, small woody volcanoes, sending forth smoke from their tops.

An oldish man was working among the odorous boughs, and being somewhat tired and undecided whether to push on towards the distant inn or to seek shelter among these squalid people I sat down. The man kept on splitting up his billets of wood, and standing them in the proper position for the erection of another mound, while I sat on a block and began talking in a querulous tone, to which he made sharp, concise replies, the while that he eyed me from beneath his shaggy brows. I solemnly declare that I thought he was penetrating my disguise, or from some covert place had seen me make the exchange of clothes.

It was one of the most weird scenes that my eyes ever beheld. The sombre darkness under the pines, the rushing sighs that wandered somewhere in their dark recesses, although one could hardly believe that a breath of wind was stirring, the extinguished and demoralized piles, the smoking cones, earth-banked and irregular, and this old smut-begrimmed fellow scuffling the pine-bristles under foot, all this conspired to give the imagination license to believe that I might be an unbidden spectator of some weird Druidical rite; that these smoking cones might be the funeral pyres of sacrificial victims. This fancy, added to the threatening tempest, gave me some disagreeable emotions, and led me, as I looked ahead to the forest-bounded road, to inquire:

"Can I not find accommodations here, sir, until after the storm?"

"There's the house yonder; you can go in if you choose," and he pointed a sooty finger towards a rough structure that, in the proper locality, would have been mistaken for a smoke-house, but his manner was so ungracious that I chose to push on.

"Perhaps I can reach the inn; the tempest may swing off over the seaboard. How far do you call it to the public-house, sir."

"Five miles, or thereabouts, as the crow flies."

"But I don't go on the air-line," I querulously replied.

"Then, up hill and down hollow, it is more than six miles."

I thanked him tartly, got up and went on with the jerky gait of an irate old man, the while that I was conscious that he was watching me from under the trees.

What had the old fellow got into his head in regard to me? was my mental query. My spirits were not at all buoyant as I pursued my way along the dusky road. The scene was so still, so sombre, so desolate, that I found myself startled by even the spring of a rabbit by the wayside or the chatter of a squirrel among the branches. I found myself getting excited by the impression that I should make some important discovery that night if I could but reach the inn. The electricity of the surcharged atmosphere affected me powerfully, so that I caught myself wishing that I had accepted the unwilling hospitality of the old charcoal-burner.

The heat was intense, the insects troublesome, and I had hurried so before I was aware of it that the sweat was trickling over my face. At intervals, long, quivering flashes of lightning darted overhead and shot under the trees, making everything distinctly visible one moment, only to hide it in impenetrable gloom the next. Then followed the loose, uneven rattle of the thunder-peals. I had proceeded thus for the distance of two miles or more from the coal-burners when the tree-tops began to shake with the rising gusts of the tempest. The wind rushed and lulled, dying away with a solemn intonation like the aspirations of gigantic lungs.

After one of these gusts had rushed past, a sound caught my ears, a sound that sent me crouching by the roadside, flattening myself down to the level of the hare which sprang alarmed from its covert.

Was it the furious riding of the unknown horseman that caused me to unconsciously, as it were, crouch in the bushes? No; for I had heard as impetuous hoof-strokes before. Was it the lonely road and suggestions of highwaymen that made every nerve within me twinge as if punctured with hot wires? No; for I had been in by far more dangerous places ere this without a muscle cringing.

Lower and lower I flatten myself, and down comes an elastic sheet of lightning, and, jerking a moment along the road, seems again caught up to heaven, while the nearer thunder pounds away almost overhead; and right through this quivering light dash as spectral a pair—horse and rider—as the fabled huntsman of the Hartz Mountains. The beast's mane and ears flicker like the fins of a fish, the tail drifting on a level with the back, the mouth wide open and the eyes like balls of fire, and the crouching, shaggy rider looking for the world like the connecting link between man and the ape. All this would not have brought me to my feet, and caused me to toss away my bundle and start in wild pursuit of the nocturnal visitor of this wild road.

Such an apparently uneven, foolish race was never before entered upon. Certainly, had I had a moment's realizing sense of the spectacle, I must have rolled into the gutter. My sudden spring and fierce pace had loosened the fastening of my false beard, and part of the time the thing hoisted itself upon my nose as spectacles, and being admonished from that position, it flew up for an ear-pad, but eventually settled down as a martingale, where it beat up and down, filling my mouth with flying hair until I wished the whole thing in Jericho. My long gray hair stranded out and squealed by my ears in the furious uprising gale. I knew that the distance and the evident terror of the hard rider would forbid his looking back, or discovering me; and, like a maniac, I dashed ahead, now leaping aside as some mighty forest monarch was cleft in twain by the thunderbolts which seemed to be actually raining about me; now stumbling, dashing, falling headlong in the thick darkness that followed the fierce glare of the nearly incessant lightning. But there was "method in my madness."

I knew nothing of the terrified rider; I could have no knowledge of his destination, but I was following the *click, click of a loose shoe*.

Was there ever a more will-o'-the-wisp chase; besides the animal's mane and tail were short, yet I acted upon uncontrollable impulse.

Both horse and rider were out of hearing as I halted, bruised, panting and ready to drop with heat, in the vicinity of the cabin of the coal-burners. For, I argued, the fellow would seek shelter here rather than to longer breast the tempest. A straggling rainfall now, with drops the size of a copper cent, striking upon the bushes; and I cautiously circled around to the rear of the cabin, which a lightning flash had made distinctly visible.

But the crash of the elements at that moment was deafening; a tornado in full force was coming through the forest. In the darkness I made a leap and crouched in the rear of the cabin. A smoking lamp shed a light through a chink in the wall, to which I placed my ear. There was a mumbling within, but whether prayer or anathema, I could not tell for the mighty roar in the woods. Doubtless the gruff old coal-man was talking with his squaw, or Dinah. Yet, wait, there is moving about within, as if some of them were too disturbed to be quiet; and as they come closer to the chink, my quickened, intent listening makes out the voice of the old man and these words:

"You're a d—d fool, Sandy, to come back into these parts with the horse, I say?"

My heart pumped away so furiously that I thought I should lose the reply, but I did not.

"I woan't comin' ter these poarts, nuncle, but the brute, cuss him, at the cross-roads took un bit in un teeth an' strooked 'er wi'out min'in' my haulin' mor'n a flea-boite."

I waited to hear no more. I crept cautiously into a hovel near but little too large for a pig, and there I found the panic-stricken horse quivering in every joint. I did not hesitate to seize him by the nostrils—the roar of the storm drowned every other noise—and drew him outside, making a little circuit, the poor creature giving spasmodic leaps at every fresh rattle of thunder, yet obedient to my guidance. Once into the road, and we fled before the gale at almost as furious a pace as he had gone previously, back to the village which I had left a little before nightfall, one only thought or prayer in my mind—that the storm would still rage on.

A furious tattoo upon the door of the inn brought "mine host" vis-a-vis to a drenched and dilapidated spectre.

He declared afterwards that seeing my beard beating against my brisket, his first thought was that I had met a landslide or been scalped.

"Bring out your lantern," I called, in subdued but excited tones, "and arouse Chief Lawson to ascertain the identity of this animal."

"Who are you?" he questioned, his eyes rolling in great surprise.

"Never mind that—get out here instantly."

I led the animal to the sheltered side of the house, where I was immediately joined by "mine host" and the chief, in undress uniform.

"Is this Mark Royal's chestnut gelding?"

"That? No—bless me, wait—no, of course not. His animal was long-maned and long-tailed; but, saints preserve us!" taking the tail in his hand and turning it over in the light, "how's this? The beast has been cropped."

"Mane and tail?"

"Mane and tail."

"And the shoe—listen," and I walked him back and forth by the verandah.

"That's it—good, George—yes; and you, mister?"

I shot aside my wig, snapped the mainspring of my beard, and tucking both in my pocket gave orders:

"Get a force of five or six men—mounted and armed; we can capture them—the coal-burners."

"Lord!" aspirates Boniface, dashing to the rear of the house to arouse Tom, Dick and Harry. In fifteen minutes five resolute men were galloping along the road, through the spent storm, eager for developements.

The cabin was surrounded, the two men made prisoners, although with oaths they protested their innocence, and refused on this ground to confess the disposal of the money and body of the murdered man.

By dawn an excited crowd of town's people were in the pine woods—an excited mass, with something dreadful showing in their faces. They circled around the ironed prisoners, growling like wild beasts, only waiting the least proof of guilt. A mob tossed the sooty cabin from its foundations, and clawed and punched among the fragments and cellar-stones, while some young fellows, with something of the spirit of wild bullocks, butted away at the smoking and earth-covered cones. By and by, the whole mass of excited people were electrified by a howl of mingled fury and horror. Some one in butting over a spent and crumbling heap had unearthed a partly burned, but terribly suggestive, bone. In a minute twenty men were down on their hands and knees scratching like dogs among the dead coal and ashes. There they lay—charred human bones. The men sprang to their feet, while an instant's awful silence followed, so that the dropping of the rain from the trembling branches was distinctly heard, and then——

I do not know that any person present could tell from whence that long, strong, snaky coil of rope descended into our midst; I do not know that any person, excepting the actual climber, could tell who went up that shattered tree, still smoking from the lightning's stroke, but Chief Lawson and myself, in rapid succession, were knocked down insensible, as with drawn pistols and expostulations we sought to protect the criminals from mob law; but as we got upon our feet, stunned by the unexpected attack, the first yellow beams of the broad day fell upon two limp bodies whirling dizzily above our heads, and the woods about gave no echo of the tread of man's feet.

After-inspection found the remains of two men in the spent coal-pits, where they had been buried, and burned, as it was supposed, beyond fear of detection. The money was never recovered.

Correspondents' Bureau

☞ All communications should be addressed to R. J. C. WALKER, Editor and Proprietor SATURDAY EVENING POST, No. 727 WALNUT Street, Philadelphia.

☞ This Department will be found an attractive feature to all our readers. In addition to important and particular information for Subscribers, Contributors, and others, it will contain many novel, instructive and entertaining topics, fully discussed in answer to the numerous Notes and Queries contained in our general correspondence.

SUBSCRIBERS' BUREAU.

TERMS for 1875. POSTAGE PREPAID TO ANY ADDRESS: SINGLE SUBSCRIBERS, one copy, four months, $1.00; six months, $1.50; one year, $3.00. CLUBS—*Four* copies, one year, postpaid, for $10.00, which is $2.50 per copy. *Eight* copies, one year for $20.00, and an additional copy FREE to any one remitting that amount at one time. Additions may be made to Clubs at same rates, viz: $2.50 each.

REMITTANCES.—All remittances should be made by Draft, Postal Money Order or Registered Letter. Money forwarded in this way is at our risk. In sending money, the amount, and what it is for, should be distinctly stated.

POSTAGE TO ANY PART OF THE UNITED STATES, HITHERTO PAID BY SUBSCRIBERS, WILL, AFTER THE FIRST OF JANUARY, 1875, BE PAID BY US WITHOUT ADDITIONAL CHARGE TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

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Authors and others will take notice that, by rules of the P. O. Department, Manuscripts intended for publication in periodicals are subject to letter rates. Rejected MSS. will not be returned, unless by special request, with sufficient stamps enclosed to prepay postage.

PURCHASING BUREAU.

In consequence of frequent applications from numerous correspondents living at a distance, for the purchase of books, jewelry and many other articles, the above department has been established. It is in charge of a thoroughly competent and responsible person, who will hereafter execute commissions for the purchase of goods of every description. The FASHION ENTRIES will give special attention to articles for Ladies' toilet. All orders must be accompanied by the money to be expended, with instructions as to kind, quality and quantity of goods desired. Packages forwarded by mail or express to any part of the country.

*** BY AN ACT OF CONGRESS passed June 23, 1874, and now in force, the mailing of articles of merchandise, in packages not exceeding *four pounds* in weight, on payment in postage at the rate of one cent for each two ounces is permitted. The former law limited the weight to one pound. The new law, therefore, will prove of great accommodation to the public, enabling people at a distance to send orders to the large cities for innumerable articles, such as dry goods, clothing, books, jewelry, seeds, bulbs, photographs, tools, stationery, teas, engravings, etc., etc., and to have the articles sent by mail at much less than express rates.

CORRESPONDENTS' NOTES AND QUERIES.

JURIST (Tazewell C. H., Va.)—We can procure for you both of the books indicated. Together, in all, four large octavo volumes, they will cost you about twenty dollars.

EX-SOLDIER.—If you have lost your discharge, the only way of getting it renewed, is to write, stating the fullest particulars, to Adjutant General E. B. Townsend, Washington, D. C.

R. W. WELLS.—The very best recipe that we know of for strengthening and promoting the growth of the hair is one that is highly recommended on the other side of the water, and is as follows: One gill each of rum and castor oil, and ten drops of oil of rosemary, to be applied twice a week.

AMATEUR.—"What preparation do the minstrels use for blackening their faces? Is it burned cork alone, or how is it prepared for the purpose?" Take the best of champagne corks, and burn them to a crisp with alcohol or other spirits. Then pulverize, and keep damp. Use it in its moist condition.

ANNIE.—You are both very foolish, but lovers sometimes quarrel more often before marriage than after. Give him no cause for jealousy, and when you marry—as it seems from your letter very certain you will do—always keep two bears in your house—bear and forbear. If both of you only attend to their teaching, you will be happy enough.

S. T.—We fear that in your question you are asking us for an impossibility—indeed, a recipe to change the course of nature. Perspiration is the safety valve to the human system, and to check it unduly is to lay the foundation of many serious disorders. To quote Shakspeare, it is better to "bear the ills you have," than to fly to others that you may more bitterly regret.

W. E. H.—We have twice or thrice during the last two or three months given the very information for which you now apply. Please read our Correspondence column more carefully, and so save us the necessity of repeating the same thing over again. If you have no consideration for us, we hope you will have some little for our readers, who must get tired of seeing the same thing repeated so often.

E. F. N.—If we were you, we would let the freckles alone. The various cosmetics advertised to remove them don't remove them in the first place, and secondly, they are all more or less injurious to the skin. Eat wholesome food, exercise abundantly in the open air, keep the hair neatly combed, and the teeth pearly white, and no one will ever care about, or even know, whether you are freckled or not.

NO POLITICIAN.—"Please tell me what is the meaning of the term 'Protectionist,' as I read about it a good deal lately in the papers, and don't understand what it means?" Protectionists are a party who are in favor of a tariff, both for the sake of the revenue it gives, and for the protection it affords to home industries. This is all we can say regarding this subject, as it is one of those which we do not care about discussing in our columns.

J. A. P.—You have acted as every right-minded young woman should act under such circumstances. We advise you to avoid the young man for the future, for you may be certain that if he could act so disgracefully to another young lady, while he was engaged to you, that he would not be faithful after marriage. You should consider yourself fortunate that you have had such a narrow escape, and found him out before it was too late.

LEARNER.—There is no more pleasant occupation for ladies than telegraphing, and, notwithstanding what your friends tell you, there is always a steady demand for good operators. They need hardly be ever out of employment. The best, and, indeed, the only safe and sure way of becoming proficient, is to practice in an office in some large city, where alone you will become thoroughly posted in all the twists and intricacies of the art.

L. D. H.—The lines you quote are in "Othello," and are uttered by Iago. They run thus:

"Who steals my purse, steals trash: 'tis something, nothing;
'Twas mine—'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed."

F. S.—To make an Æolian harp: Make a common deal box, consisting of top, bottom, and ends only, of a size that will fit into an ordinary window, and stretch across it as many strings of catgut as you please from end to end. These strings should be tuned, and of different thicknesses, like those of a violin. When made, place it in the window, and shut the sash down upon the top, and the air, as it forces its way through, will produce the music.

LIZZIE.—If the gentleman has been paying you steady attentions, and you have every reason to consider him your lover, there is no impropriety in your receiving presents from him. (2.) The 8th of February, 1856, fell upon Friday; June 29, 1853, on Wednesday; and July 8, 1851, on Tuesday. (3.) We should think that the regular attention—to say nothing about the kisses—is a sign of love; but, really, this is too delicate a question for a staid editor to determine.

J. H. G.—We are very glad to find that our previous advice to you was suitable to the case, and also to hear that your husband has changed from his bad courses. It now, in a great measure, rests with you to reform him entirely. Women don't, we think, know half the power they might exercise over their husbands, if they would only use it in a judicious manner. A clean, comfortable home, paying attention to his tastes, making his home happy, and a neat, cheerful wife, will bind most men to their home, and render them energetic and persevering in gaining the means to support it.

TEACHER.—The first public school in the American Colonies was established at Philadelphia, on February 12th, 1698, and a corporation created, entitled "The Overseers of the Publick Schoole founded" in Philadelphia. In this school it was ordered by the governor and council that "all children and servants, male and female, whose parents, guardians, or masters" were willing to let them attend, would be received and instructed, "the rich at reasonable rates, and the poor for nothing." The first schoolhouse was built on the east side of Fourth street, below Chestnut street, and Enoch Flower was the first schoolmaster.

T. S. J. (Wilkesbarre).—You do not trouble us at all. We are always ready to answer reasonable questions of our readers. To take grease spots out of silk: Pour over each spot two drops of rectified spirits of wine, cover over with a linen cloth, press it with a hot iron for a second, and then remove the linen immediately. The spot will still look bad, for only a portion of the grease will have been abstracted, but the rest may be easily removed by first dropping a little sulphuric ether over the spot, and afterwards gently rubbing them. If properly done, not the slightest trace of the grease spots will remain. Eau de Cologne will also remove spots of grease from silk or cloth.

CHESTER.—The particulars you require as to the "Great Eastern" are as follows: Length, 692 feet; breadth, 83 feet. The weight of the ship, without cargo, is 12,000 tons. She was constructed to carry 5,000 passengers from London to Australia, providing accommodation for 800 first-class passengers, 2,000 second-class, and 1,200 third-class. It was about six weeks before she was fairly launched, and met with several mishaps at the beginning of her career. She was purchased by Messrs. Glass & Co., and employed in the laying of the Atlantic and other cables, in which she has been most successful. Though the idea that prevailed during her building has proved a failure, we have no doubt that a well-paying career is yet before her. She is unquestionably the strongest vessel ever built.

DEXTER.—It is impossible to give you any information regarding the trotting races in England, as they are there considered of such little importance, that no fast time has been made or record kept, so that no comparison can be made between their time and the fast time of American trotters. In England, running races are all the thing, and record of the time made is only kept for the Derby, St. Leger, and the Oaks, for which races only three-year olds are allowed to start. The Derby course is one and a half miles, and the fastest time made was in 1861, by Kettledrum, 2.43, carrying one hundred and ten pounds. The fastest time made over the St. Leger course, which is one and three-quarter miles, was by Sir Tatton Sykes, in 1848; time, 3.16. Gladiateur, the celebrated French horse, is reported to have run a mile over Newmarket Heath in 1.39, carrying one hundred and ten pounds, but there is no public record of the event.

I. N. L.—"Inclosed please find three dollars to pay for my subscription to the good old POST for 1875. My grandfather took the POST, from the very first number, as long as he lived, then my father continued to take it until his death, and I have taken it on since his death, and hope to do so as long as I live. I have been unfortunate lately, having lost considerable money, some of which was by investing in the Sunbury & Lewistown Railroad. The road was sold last spring by the bondholders, but I have received nothing as yet from the proceeds of the sale. Will you please make some inquiry about it, for the sake of an old friend, and tell me if you can what the prospect is of my getting anything from it?" It gives us very great pleasure to oblige such an old and constant friend of the POST, and wish we could give you more satisfactory information than we are able to do. The Sunbury & Lewistown Railroad was sold out under a foreclosure of the mortgage, and was bought in by a portion of the bondholders, who had combined for that purpose. It is difficult to say what the bondholders will ultimately realize, as the money has been paid into court, and it is presumed the expenses will be considerable. We have heard twenty-five per cent. mentioned as the probable ultimate value, but consider it somewhat of a conjecture.

AMBITIOUS.—It always gives us pleasure to meet a young man who is really ambitious, as you profess yourself to be, of "getting on in the world," and we gladly give you the best advice in our power to help you on towards the accomplishment of your desires. There are different ways of getting on in this world. It does not always mean making a great deal of money, or being a great man for people to look up to with wonder. Leaving off a bad habit for a good one, is getting on in the world; to be careful and saving, instead of thoughtless and wasteful, is getting on; to be active and industrious, instead of idle and lazy, is getting on; to be kind and forbearing, instead of ill-natured and quarrelsome, is getting on; to work as diligently in your employer's absence as in his presence, is getting on. In short, when we see any one properly attentive to his duties, persevering through such difficulties to gain such knowledge as shall be of use to himself and to others, we may be sure that he is getting on in the world. Money is a very useful article in its way, but it is possible to get on with small means, for it is a mistake to suppose that we must wait for a *good deal* of money before we can do anything. Those who wish to get on in the world must have a stock of patience and perseverance, of hopeful confidence, a willingness to learn, and a disposition not easily cast down by difficulties and disappointments.

J. C. (Millville).—If you could only see the number of letters we have to answer, you would not accuse us of dilatoriness. Very many of the letters we receive contain inquiries that necessitate reference either to books or to some special sources of information that are not easily obtainable, and hence there is occasional delay. You asked us when and how gas was first discovered. Gas was first brought into notice in a curious manner by an English gentleman, at Wigan, Lancashire, in 1659, who, on returning from a journey, heard some people talking of a spring, the water of which burned like oil. He went to the spot, and, on applying a lighted candle to the water, it burst out into a bright flame. In 1726, Dr. Hales made several experiments with gas, which he called an "inflammable elastic air," but it was not until 1792, that any practical use was made of it, when a Mr. Murdoch, of Redruth, Cornwall, manufactured gas and lit up his house and offices. In 1807, Mr. Winsor obtained permission to erect a few gas lamps on one side of Pall Mall. In 1810, the first gas company was established, although Lord Brougham, Sir Humphry Davy, and many others, ridiculed the idea, many believing that the pipes that conveyed the gas would become red hot, and set fire to the buildings in which they were placed. Even the lamplighters became panic-stricken, and struck work. For many years its price (15s. per 1,000 feet) was a great bar to its extension, and there are but few Londoners of fifty years of age, who cannot well remember whole streets and thoroughfares lit up with the old, stinking oil-lamps, and the still more stinking torch of the lamplighter as he passed by the dwellings on his nightly duty.

GEO. C. J.—"I should like if you could tell me what is the real expense of the English Royal Family, and in what manner the money is raised to pay the enormous pensions to the various members of the Royal Family, about which we read so much in the papers?" In the first place, the income of Queen Victoria is much less than that of previous sovereigns. By the resolution of 1688, the duty of the king to bear the expenses of the government out of the state income allotted to him was abolished, and certain portions of the income of the country were assigned to the king to meet the expenses of the royal household. Under George I, this sum amounted at times to £1,000,000 sterling. In 1777, it was fixed at £900,000. Under William IV, the civil list was relieved of many burdens, and fixed at £510,000. In the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign, all these crown revenues were surrendered and formed into a consolidated fund, out of which a civil list of £385,000 a year was assigned to her "for the support of Her Majesty's household and of the honor and dignity of the Crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland," out of which only £100,000 a year is at Her Majesty's absolute disposal, the remainder being for salaries of the household, retiring allowances and pensions to servants, bounty, alms, and special services, each of these being specified by Act of Parliament. To this amount of £385,000 we must add the revenue derived from the Duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall, cost of maintaining the various royal palaces, and the annuities to all the princes and princesses, aggregating about £240,000, making a total charge of £625,000 a year as the incomes of the Royal Family. Now the crown lands and revenues which were surrendered to the country produce a profit of £390,000 a year, so that royalty actually costs the British taxpayers less than £250,000 a year, or about ninepence (eighteen cents) upon a taxable income of £100 (five hundred dollars) a year.

MISCELLANEOUS.—HENRY K.—Thanks for your suggestions, but will try and comply with your wishes.—M. E. M.—We regret our inability to advise you how you can improve your condition. A. W. B.—The applications for situations in the business you refer to are much in excess of the vacancies. B. A. C.—Judging from appearances, the parties seem to be reliable, but we, of course, do not vouch for them. G. H. N.—It is caused partly by fires and partly by a peculiar state of the atmosphere at that season of the year. A SUBSCRIBER (Greensville).—We should say the relationship was first-cousin once removed. R. F.—Yours is a case of dyspepsia, for which you had better consult a physician. It is easily remedied, if seen to in time. HELEN.—If you have no affection for him, you have not acted properly in receiving his presents. L. E. M.—Consult your parents. If they are satisfied, then it will be all right. P. L. B.—We know of no book that will tell you. A little observation will teach you more than any book. MACHINIST.—It is a case in which you ought to consult a medical man, because weakness of sight may arise from divers causes, and, therefore, one general receipt cannot be given. JENNIE.—The gentleman no doubt loves you, but he seems to be timid in declaring himself. You must have patience.

☞ *A number of communications have been received, which will be answered next week.*